



DYNAMITE

BATMAN™ *THE Shadow*

**THE MURDER
GENIUSES**



**SCOTT SNYDER
STEVE ORLANDO**

**RILEY ROSSMO
IVAN PLASCENCIA**

*RP
1/6*

BATMAN

THE MURDER
GENIUSES

THE Shadow



BATMAN

THE MURDER GENIUSES

THE Shadow

Story by
SCOTT SNYDER and STEVE ORLANDO

Script by
STEVE ORLANDO

Art by
RILEY ROSSMO

Colors by
IVAN PLASCENCIA

Letters by
CLEM ROBINS
with
DERON BENNETT
(Prologue)

Cover Art and Original Series Covers by
RILEY ROSSMO

Special Thanks to
ANTHONY MISIANO

BATMAN
created by **BOB KANE**
with **BILL FINGER**





MARK DOYLE Editor – Original Series
DAVE WIELGOSZ Assistant Editor – Original Series
JEB WOODARD Group Editor – Collected Editions
SCOTT NYBAKKEN Editor – Collected Edition
STEVE COOK Design Director – Books
CURTIS KING JR. Publication Design

BOB HARRAS Senior VP – Editor-in-Chief, DC Comics
PAT McCALLUM Executive Editor, DC Comics

DIANE NELSON President
DAN DiDIO Publisher
JIM LEE Publisher
GEOFF JOHNS President & Chief Creative Officer
AMIT DESAI Executive VP – Business & Marketing Strategy,
Direct to Consumer & Global Franchise Management
SAM ADES Senior VP & General Manager, Digital Services
BOBBIE CHASE VP & Executive Editor,
Young Reader & Talent Development
MARK CHIARELLO Senior VP – Art, Design & Collected Editions
JOHN CUNNINGHAM Senior VP – Sales & Trade Marketing
ANNE DePIES Senior VP – Business Strategy,
Finance & Administration
DON FALLETTI VP – Manufacturing Operations
LAWRENCE GANEM VP – Editorial Administration
& Talent Relations
ALISON GILL Senior VP – Manufacturing & Operations
HANK KANALZ Senior VP – Editorial Strategy
& Administration
JAY KOGAN VP – Legal Affairs
JACK MAHAN VP – Business Affairs
NICK J. NAPOLITANO VP – Manufacturing Administration
EDDIE SCANNELL VP – Consumer Marketing
COURTNEY SIMMONS Senior VP – Publicity & Communications
JIM (SKI) SOKOLOWSKI VP – Comic Book Specialty Sales
& Trade Marketing
NANCY SPEARS VP – Mass, Book, Digital Sales & Trade Marketing
MICHELE R. WELLS VP – Content Strategy

NICK BARRUCCI
CEO/Publisher
JUAN COLLADO
President/COO

JOE RYBRANDT
Executive Editor
MATT IDELSON
Senior Editor
ANTHONY MARQUES
Associate Editor
MATT HUMPHREYS
Assistant Editor
KEVIN KETNER
Assistant Editor

JASON ULLMEYER
Design Director
GEOFF HARKINS
Senior Graphic Designer
CATHLEEN HEARD
Graphic Designer
ALEXIS PERSSON
Graphic Designer
CHRIS CANIANO
Digital Associate
RACHEL KILBURY
Digital Assistant

BRANDON DANTE PRIMAVERA
VP of IT. and Operations
RICH YOUNG
Director of Business Development

ALAN PAYNE
VP of Sales and Marketing
KEITH DAVIDSEN
Marketing Director
PAT O'CONNELL
Sales Manager

Special Thanks —
NEIL MCGINNESS, Condé Nast

**BATMAN/THE SHADOW:
THE MURDER GENIUSES**

Compilation published by DC Comics.
Copyright © 2017 DC Comics and Advance
Magazine Publishers Inc. d/b/a Condé Nast.
All Rights Reserved. Originally published in
single magazine form in BATMAN
ANNUAL 1 and BATMAN/THE SHADOW
1-6. DC LOGO, BATMAN and all related
characters and elements © & ™ DC Comics.
The Shadow ® & © 2017 Advance Magazine
Publishers Inc. d/b/a Condé Nast. All Rights
Reserved. Dynamite, Dynamite
Entertainment and its logo are ® and © 2017
Dynamite. All Rights Reserved. The stories,
characters and incidents featured in this
publication are entirely fictional. DC Comics
does not read or accept unsolicited ideas,
stories or artwork.

DC Comics
2900 West Alameda Ave. Burbank, CA 91505



**GOTHAM CITY.
CHERRY HILL.**

THANK
YOU ALL FOR
COMING.

TONIGHT,
I'M HERE TO
WELCOME THE PERSON
WHO MADE THIS WINTER
TOWN POSSIBLE, AND WHO
EVERY YEAR CREATES A
NEW ATTRACTION FOR
THE YOUTH OF
GOTHAM.

A **BILLIONAIRE**
WHO HAS PLEDGED
TO DONATE HIS WEALTH
IN **TOTALITY** DURING HIS
LIFE. SOMEONE WITH THE
DREAM TO DIE PENNILESS,
SO **OTHERS** DON'T HAVE
TO. MY FRIEND...

...MISTER
**BARRY
O'NEILL!**

THANK
YOU, BRUCE.
THANK YOU,
COMMISSIONER
GORDON, I--

YOU
MOCK ME,
O'NEILL!



CRASH

YOU MOCK
MY LIFE'S
WORK!

I **WARNED** YOU! YOUR
PLYWOOD ICE WORLD IS A
FAKE! ONLY **I** CAN TRULY
RETURN THE WORLD TO
THE **ICE** FROM WHICH
IT CAME!



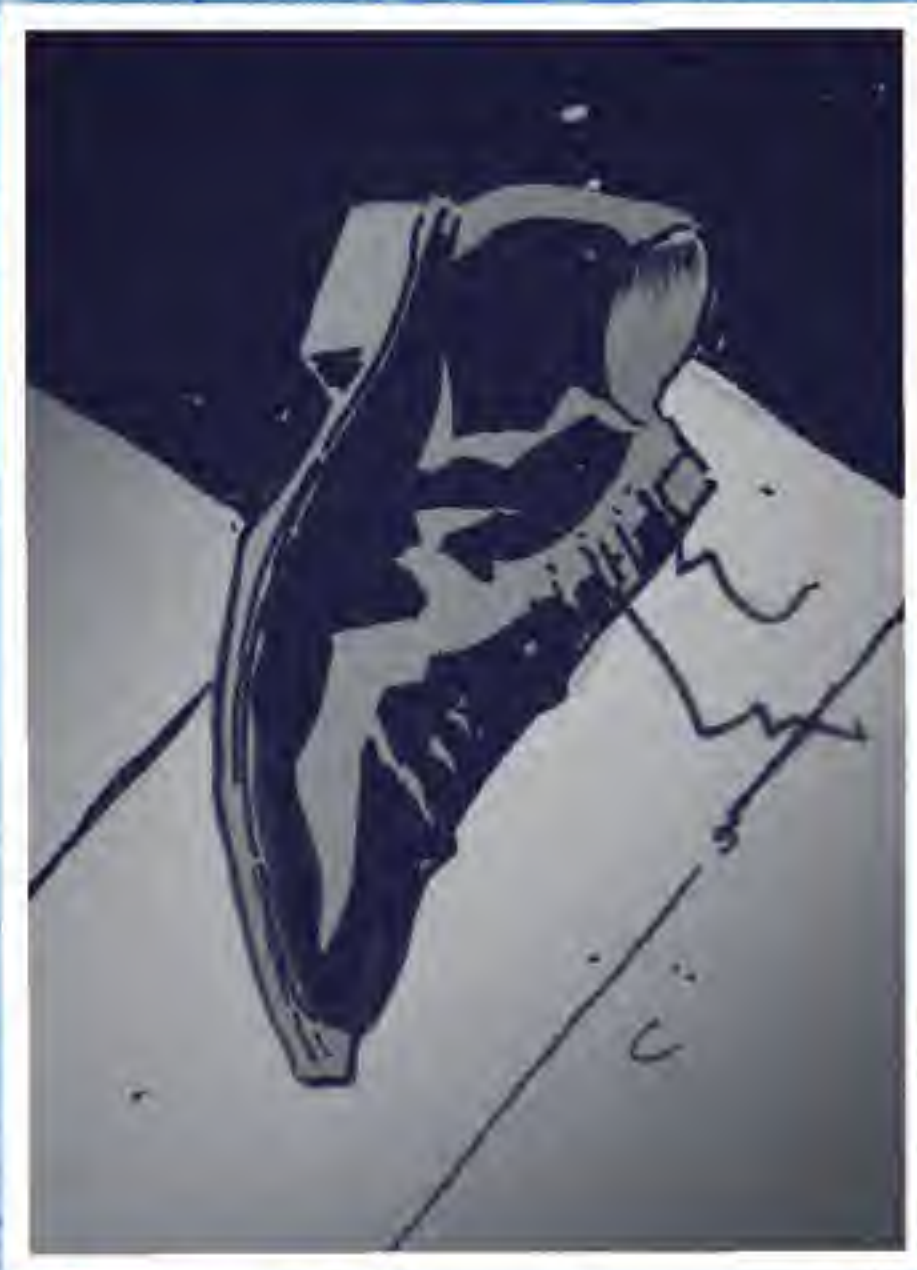
DEAR LORD,
**MINISTER
BLIZZARD.**

...MINISTER
BLIZZARD?

HE'S BEEN
SENDING ME
LETTERS! I DIDN'T
THINK HE WAS
SERIOUS.



I'M GETTING
THE **KIDS** OUT OF
HERE. YOU AND
BRUCE NEED TO-- **BRUCE?**



I'VE DEDICATED MY **LIFE** TO RESTORING THE ICE AGE, O'NEILL!

YOUR WINTER WORLD **INSULTS** ME! MY LIFE'S STRUGGLE, PACKAGED AS A **CHILDREN'S TRIFLE!**

I AM NOT MAD! THERE **IS** A HIDDEN KINGDOM ENCASED IN SNOW, BUT YOUR HUMAN MONEY AND SHABBERIES CAN'T BRING IT BACK.



THE COST WILL BE **MUCH** HIGHER, STARTING WITH YOUR--



--BLOOD?





START WITH YOURSELF.

SNNnggGGGggggG...



snggggggggggg

SNGGGggggggg

snggggggg-GLH

"Okay, O'Neill. Blizzard's secure. Explain."

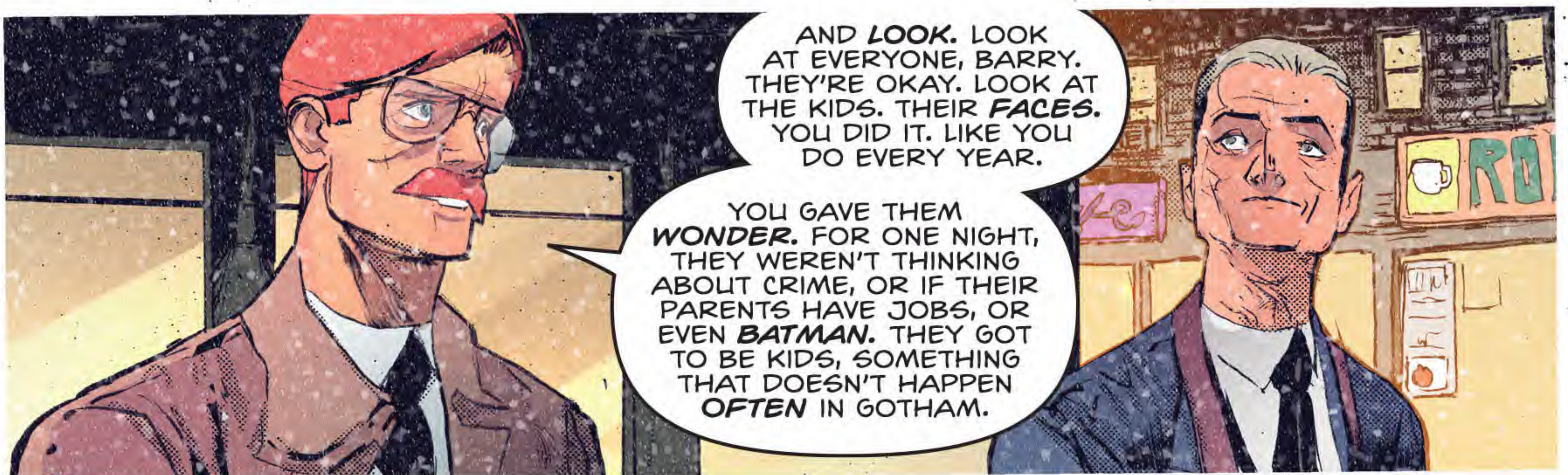


HE SAID HE'S THE PRIME MINISTER OF AN ICE KINGDOM. I SHOULD'VE LISTENED TO THE LETTERS. PEOPLE COULD'VE BEEN HURT. I WANTED TONIGHT TO BE PERFECT.



PRIME MINISTER? FOR ALL WE KNOW, HE'S FROM BAYONNE.

YOU **SHOULD'VE** TOLD GCPD. BUT I GET IT. YOU DIDN'T WANT TO **TARNISH** THE NIGHT.



AND **LOOK**. LOOK AT EVERYONE, BARRY. THEY'RE OKAY. LOOK AT THE KIDS. THEIR **FACES**. YOU DID IT. LIKE YOU DO EVERY YEAR.

YOU GAVE THEM **WONDER**. FOR ONE NIGHT, THEY WEREN'T THINKING ABOUT CRIME, OR IF THEIR PARENTS HAVE JOBS, OR EVEN **BATMAN**. THEY GOT TO BE KIDS, SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN **OFTEN** IN GOTHAM.

"You did that."

PENNY
FOR YOUR
THOUGHTS,
BRUCE?

WELL,
MORE LIKE A
QUARTER, I
GUESS.

COME IN,
DUKE. NO
CHARGE.

KATE HAD
ALFRED MAKE
THEM UP. SHE'S
CELEBRATING
THIS WEEK.

YOU'VE BEEN IN
HERE FOR **HOURS**.
WHAT'S ON YOUR
MIND?

...BARRY
O'NEILL HAS
BEEN PUTTING
HIS WEALTH
TO WORK FOR
GOTHAM LONGER
THAN I'VE BEEN
ALIVE.

MY **MOTHER**
LOOKED UP TO
HIM. HE REBUILT
GOTHAM VILLAGE.
TWICE. HE'S
MADE MIRACLES
HAPPEN FOR
GENERATIONS
OF GOTHAM'S
DISADVANTAGED
YOUTH.

AND
HE'S NEARLY
A HUNDRED
YEARS OLD.

I CAN
PUNCH BACK
MINISTER
BLIZZARD
OR LORD
DEATH-MAN
OR FAÇADE
EVERY TIME.

I CAN
FIGHT. I
ALWAYS
WILL. BUT
EVENTUALLY,
HE'LL BE
GONE.

NO MATTER
HOW MANY
TIMES I **SAVE**
PEOPLE, THEY
ALL COME UP
AGAINST THE
ONE THING I
CAN'T SAVE
THEM FROM.

IT'S
NOT NEW.
I'VE ALWAYS
KNOWN.
BUT I DON'T
HAVE TO
LIKE IT.

"Someday..."

"...something comes for us all..."

"...even the *best* of us."

WHAT?

NO! STAY AWAY!

DON'T-- WHAT ARE YOU--

STAG-SHLIRK

I AM AN HONEST SIGNAL.

END PROLOGUE





THE FRENCH ALPS.
PROVENCE-ALPES-
CÔTE D'AZUR.

NOW.

YOU'VE
CLIMBED A
LONG WAY
FROM THE
STREETS OF
GOTHAM.

I REMEMBER FIRST
MEETING YOU--YOUNG,
STUPID AND ANGRY.

"HENRI DUCARD--
THE WORLD'S GREATEST
MANHUNTER," YOU CALLED
ME. I DISARMED YOU WITH
MY **STRICT CONTESTOR**--
A MERE **TRAINING**
SWORD.

BUT YOU
DIDN'T RUN.
YOU WANTED TO
LEARN.

YOU HAD
THE **SAME**
LOOK ON YOUR
FACE AS YOU
DO NOW.

WHAT
CAN I **DO**
FOR YOU,
BRUCE?

TEACH,
DUCARD. FOR
YEARS, YOUR WAYS
HELPED ME THROUGH
COUNTLESS
CASES...

BUT I'VE
FINALLY FOUND
A **MYSTERY**
I CAN'T
UNRAVEL.

ARKHAM
ASYLUM.

GOTHAM
COUNTY.

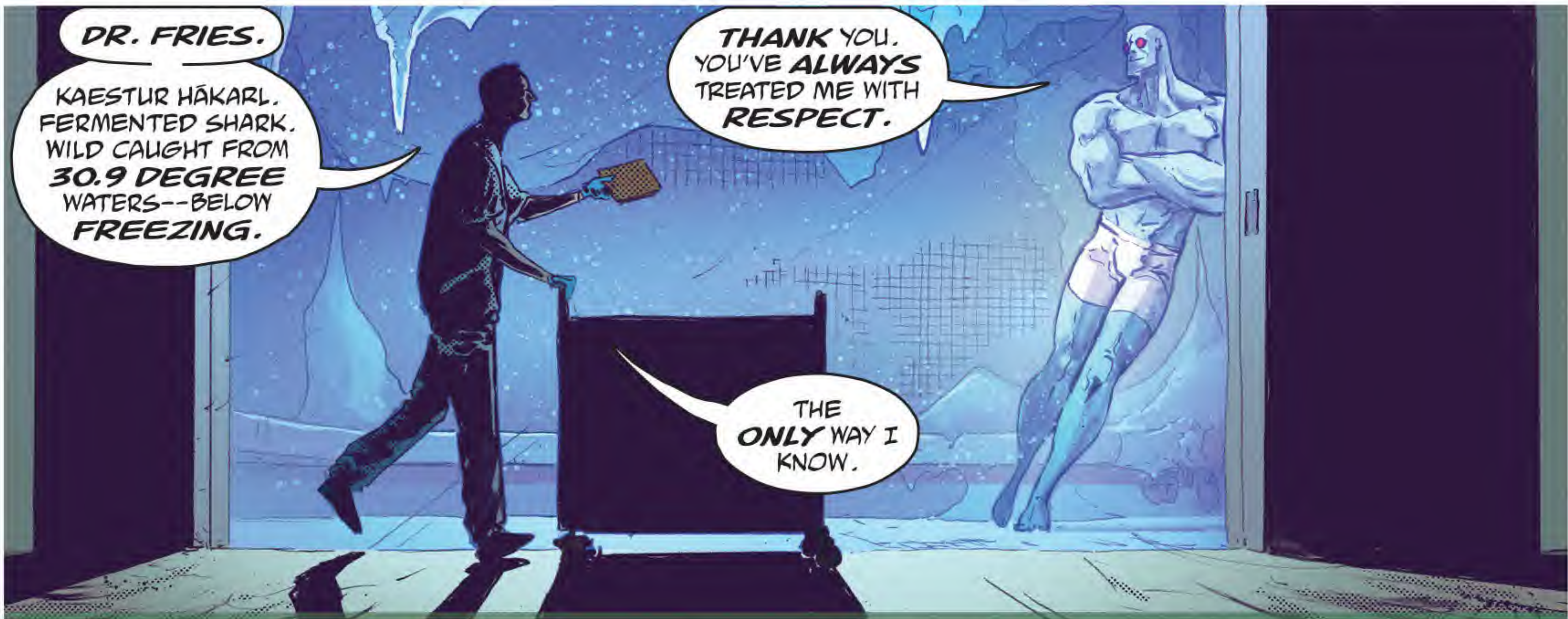
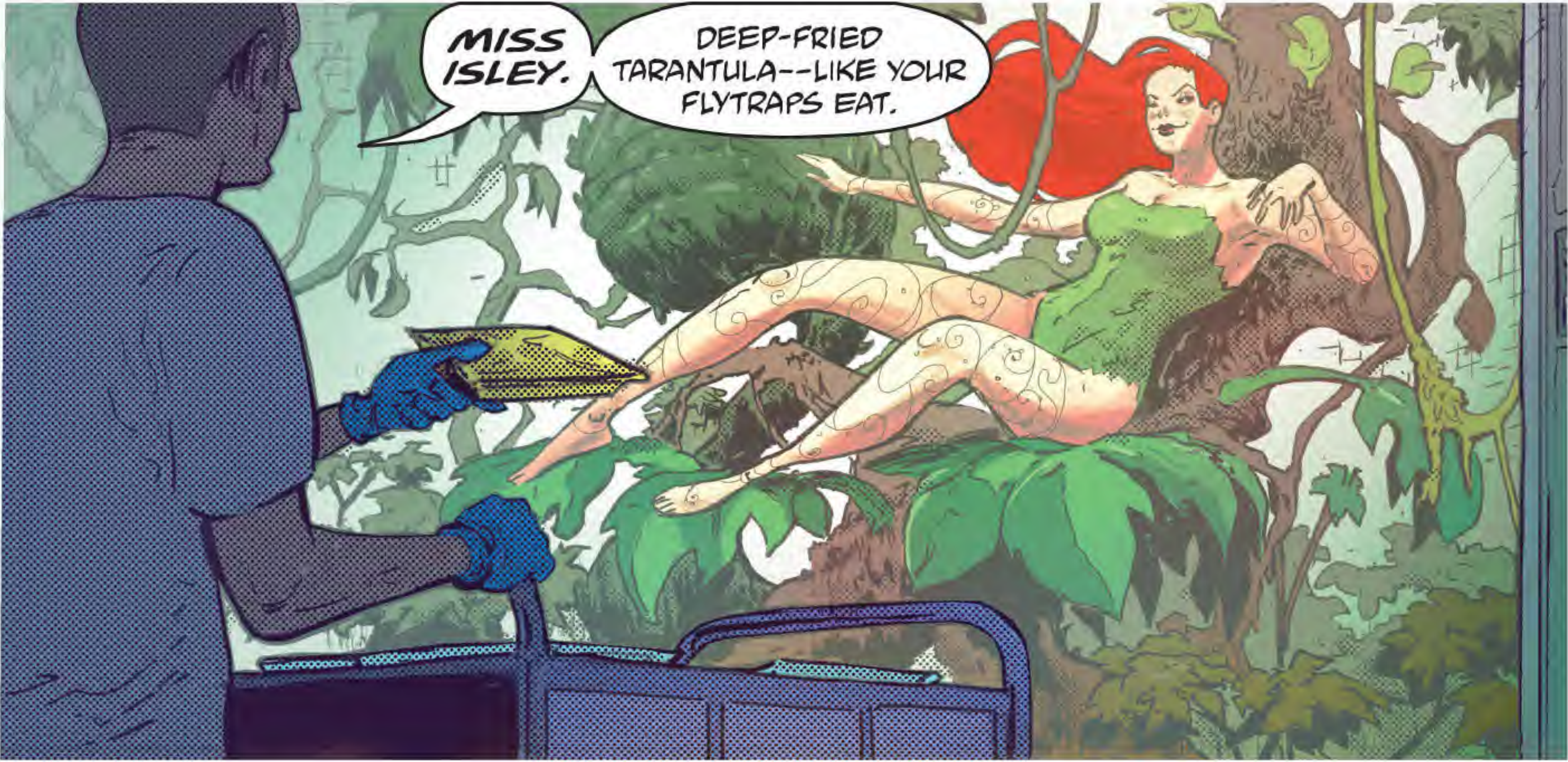
ONE
WEEK
AGO.

HEY!
WHAT'S IN YOUR
CART TODAY? ANY-
THING **GOOD**?

STILL DON'T
GET **WHY** YOU
DO IT NIGHT AFTER
NIGHT, MAN. YOU
REALLY **CARE** OR
SOMETHING?



I'M **JUST**
DOING
THE ROUNDS,
AARON.



SMITHSTREET ARMS
APARTMENTS.

SOON AFTER.

CALM
DOWN,
RUSSELL.
WHAT
ARE YOU
BARKING
ABOUT?
IT'S JUST
ME.

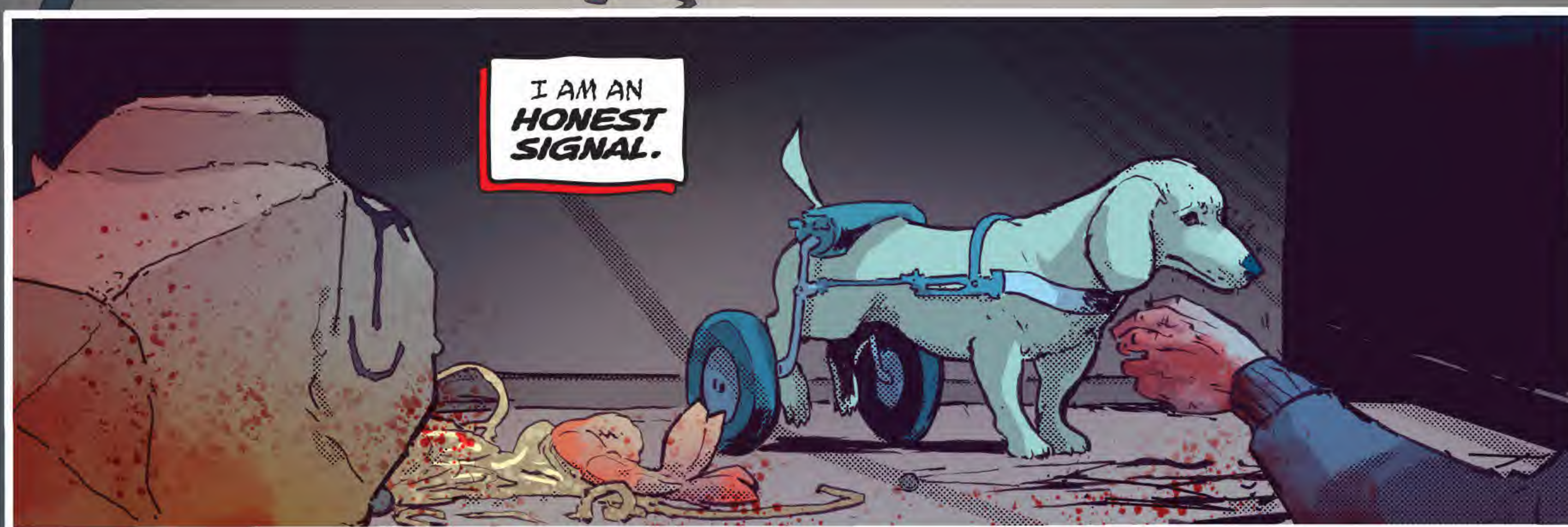
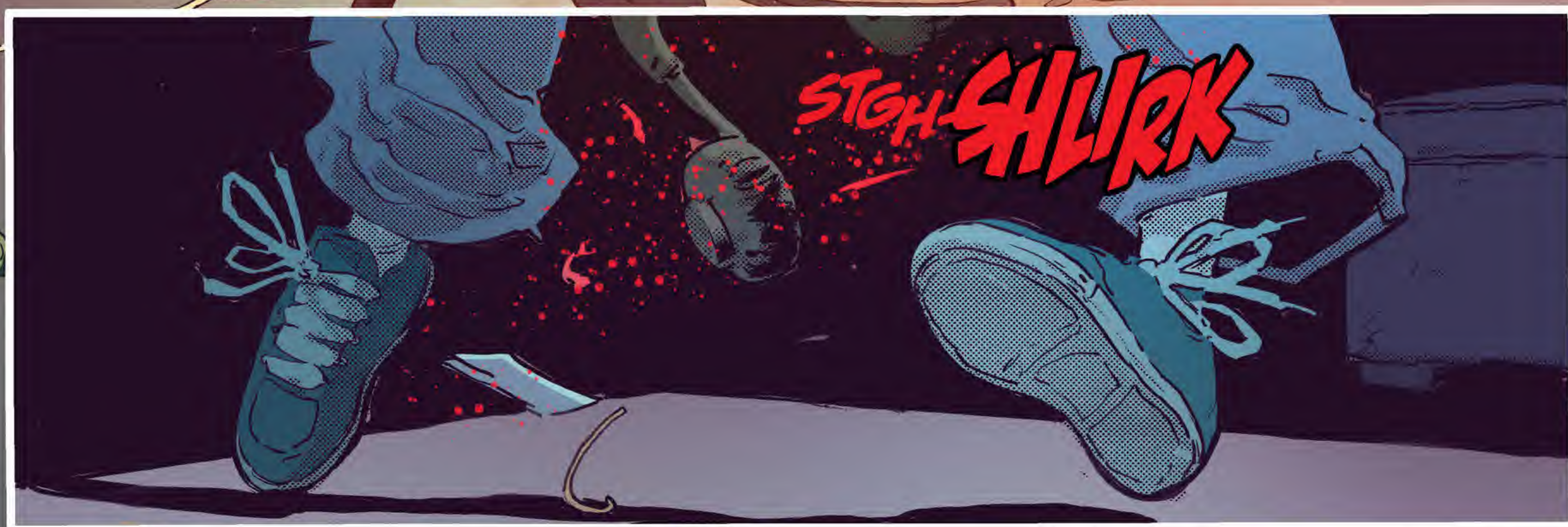
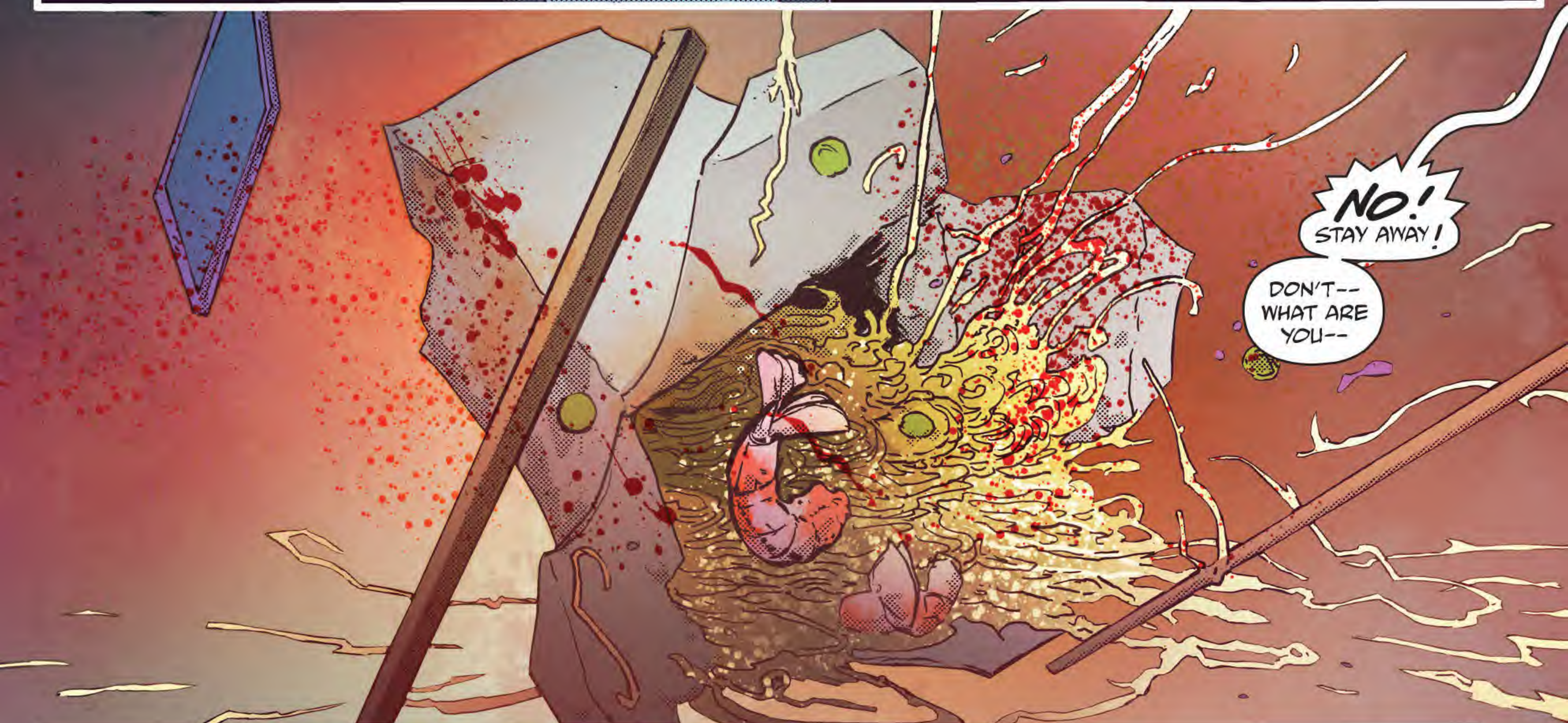
LOOK AT
YOU! KEEP
THE HOUSE
SAFE?

READ ANY
BOOKS
WHILE I WAS
GONE?

HEY! IT'S REESE. GREAT
HANGING OUT LAST NIGHT--
WHO KNEW ANYONE WAS INTO
THE **MANIAKS**?

ANYWAY, YOU SEEM
LIKE A SWEET GUY. IF IT'S
NOT WEIRD...ARE YOU FREE THIS
WEEKEND? NO BIG IF NOT. I JUST
HAD A GREAT TIME...AND I
DON'T WANT TO MISS OUR
CHANCE, **YOU KNOW?**

I'M REALLY EXCITED TO
SEE WHAT COMES **NEXT.**



HOURS LATER.

PLACE IS SEALED AND TAGGED, PEOPLE.

GO AHEAD, I'LL MEET THE CORONER. NO REASON FOR US **ALL** TO MISS BREAKFAST.

YOU'RE A **SAINT**, MONTROYA.

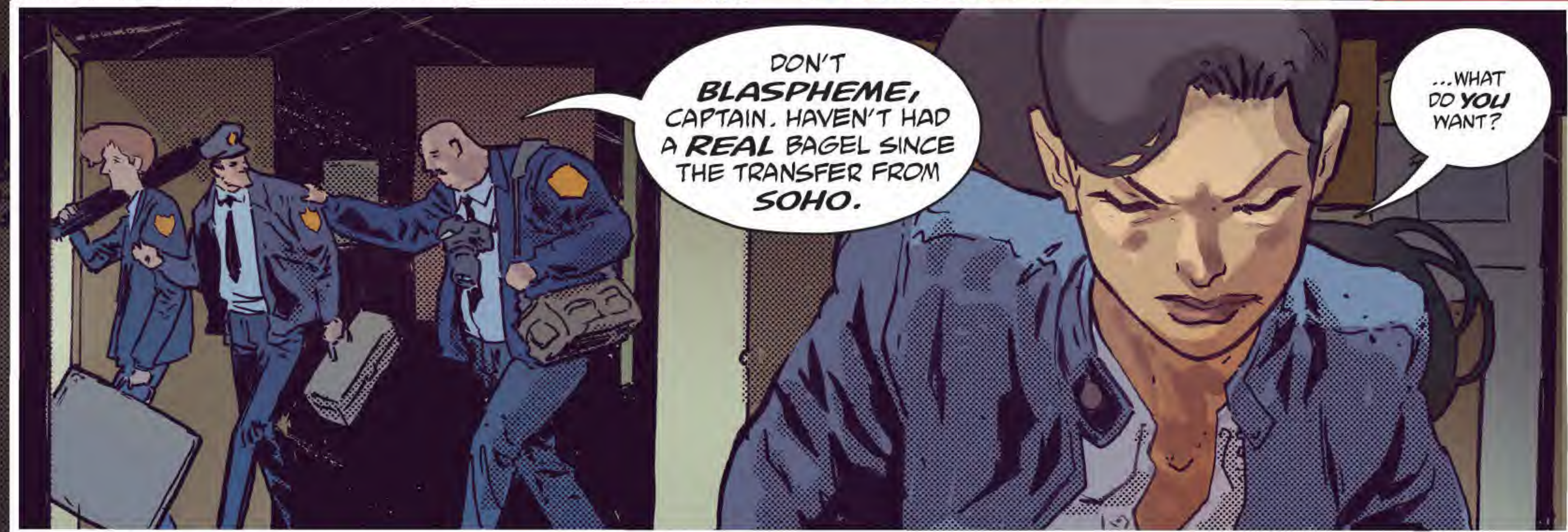
DON'T CANONIZE ME **YET**, GROGAN.

PAPER-WORK'S HEADING **RIGHT** FOR YOUR DESK. NEXT TO THAT BAGEL AND COFFEE.



DON'T **BLASPHEME**, CAPTAIN. HAVEN'T HAD A **REAL** BAGEL SINCE THE TRANSFER FROM **SOHO**.

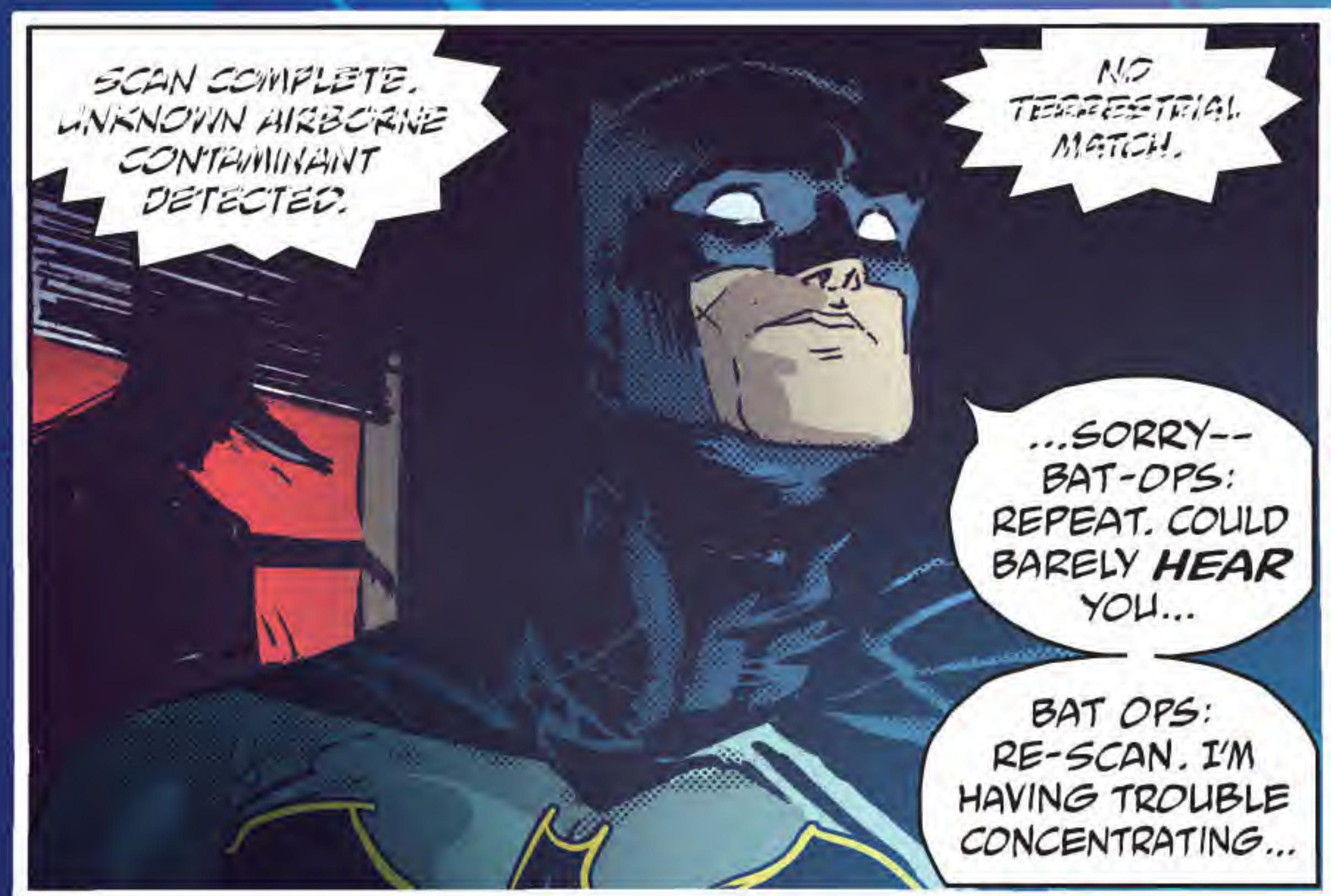
...WHAT DO YOU WANT?

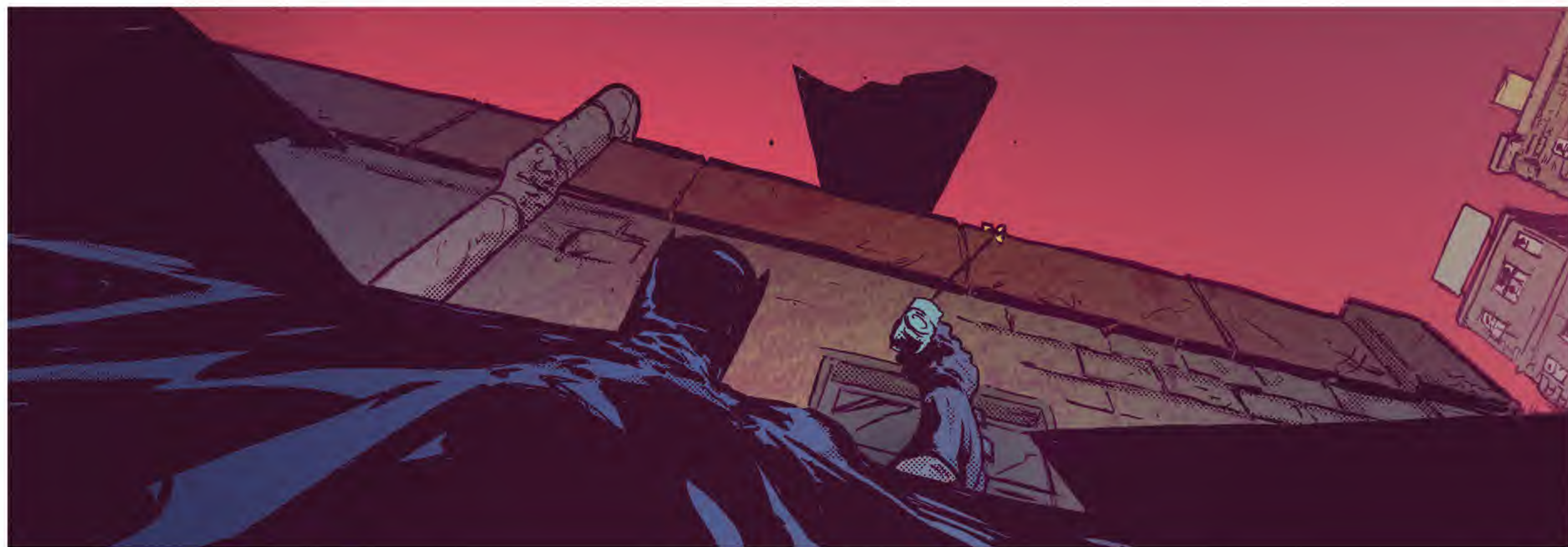


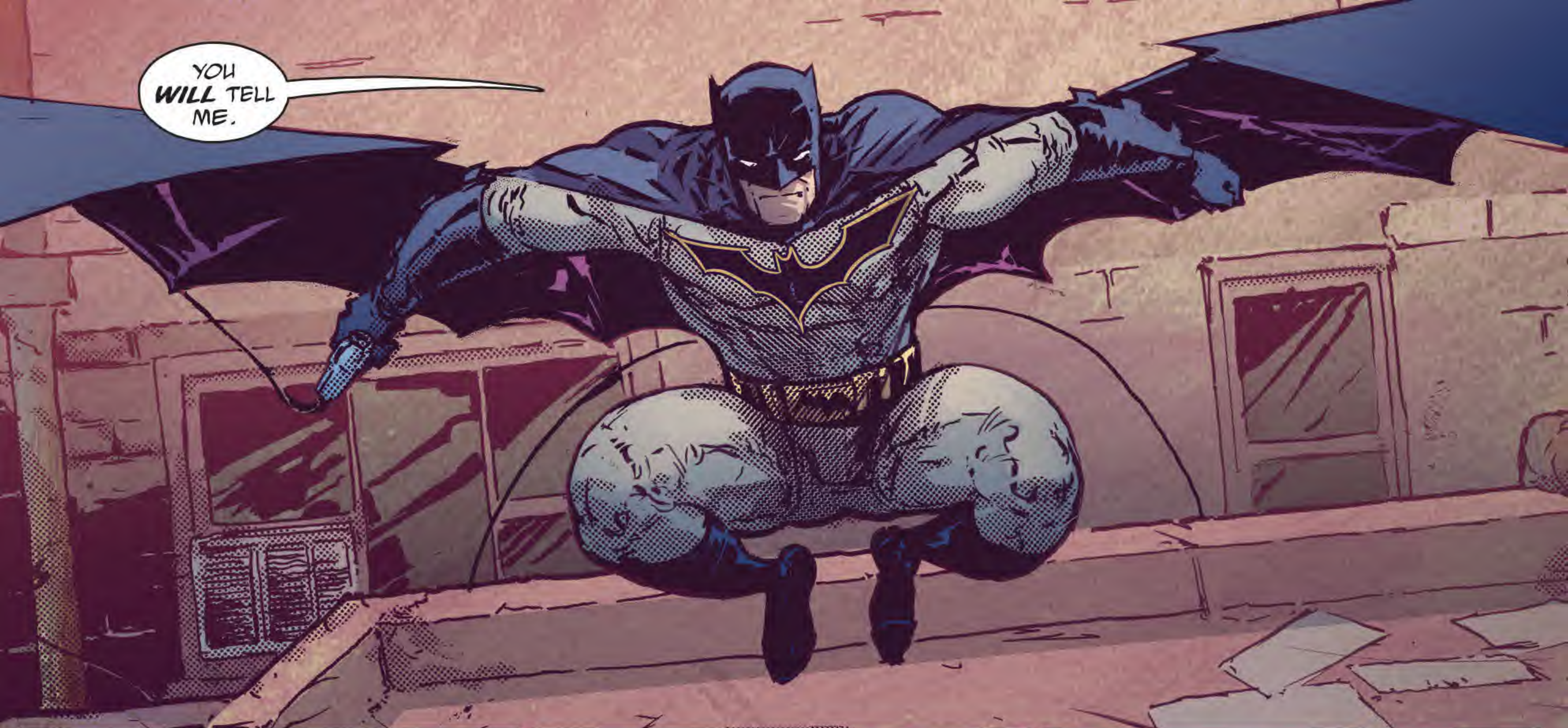
I NEED TIME WITH THE BODY. **ALONE**.

YOU THE **COMMISSIONER** NOW?









YOU
WILL TELL
ME.



BATMAN. YOU'RE NOT
SUPPOSED TO BE HERE.



A MAN IS
DEAD.



I'M **EXACTLY**
WHERE I NEED
TO BE.



YOU'VE FALLEN TO A WORLD BIGGER
AND DARKER THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE.



I **DON'T**
LOOK AWAY
FROM THE
DARK.



"NO WORLD IS BEYOND OUR
REACH, EXCEPT THAT WHICH
WE TURN AWAY FROM."



PATRICK
WOULD BE
PROUD, BRUCE.



...THE
LETTER.
NO.

THERE'S **NO**
WAY YOU COULD
KNOW THAT.



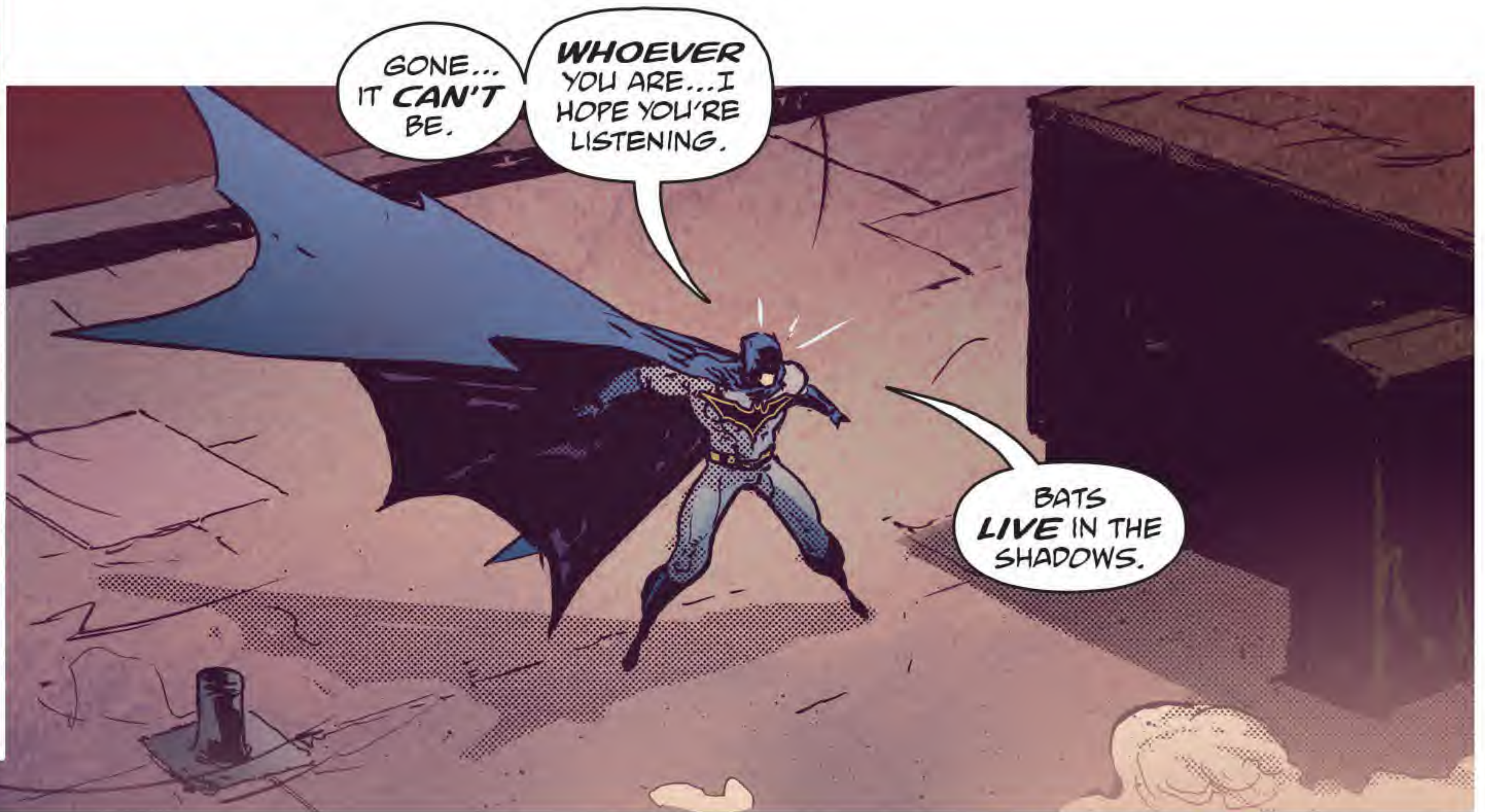
THE
SHADOW
KNOWS.



...WHAT?



HNGAH!
WHERE DID--



GONE...
IT **CAN'T**
BE.

WHOEVER
YOU ARE...I
HOPE YOU'RE
LISTENING.

BATS
LIVE IN THE
SHADOWS.



"I'M
COMING
FOR YOU."

THE
BATCAVE.

BAT-OPS:
EVIDENCE LOG. BEGIN
CASE FILE 1994.
RECORDING.

YES, BAT-1.

ITEM ONE:
PREHISTORIC DAGGER.
DATED OVER 50,000
YEARS OLD. PERFECT MATCH
TO VICTIM'S SKULL
WOUND.



KNOCKED
FROM THE **HANDS**
OF A MAN WHO WASN'T
THERE.

NO
FINGER-
PRINTS.



ITEM TWO:
**LAMONT
CRANSTON.**
DECEASED.

AGE
THIRTY-
THREE. TYPE O
NEGATIVE. ARKHAM
FOOD SERVICE.
FOSTER PARENT
TO RESCUE
DOGS.

BAT-OPS:
OPEN COWL
FOOTAGE
1931.

YES,
BAT-1.



THIRD ITEM: AN
IMPOSSIBILITY.

A LETTER FROM
MY GRANDFATHER. HELD IN
TRUST. I BURNED IT WHEN I WAS
THIRTEEN. NO ONE ELSE SAW IT.
BUT **THE SHADOW** KNEW.

BAT-OPS:
RUN FACIAL
RECOGNITION.

YES,
BAT-1.



SCANNING DATA FIELDS. NATIONAL
CENSUS--NEGATIVE. LIVE CCTV--
NEGATIVE. VIDEO
ARCHIVES--
NEGATIVE.

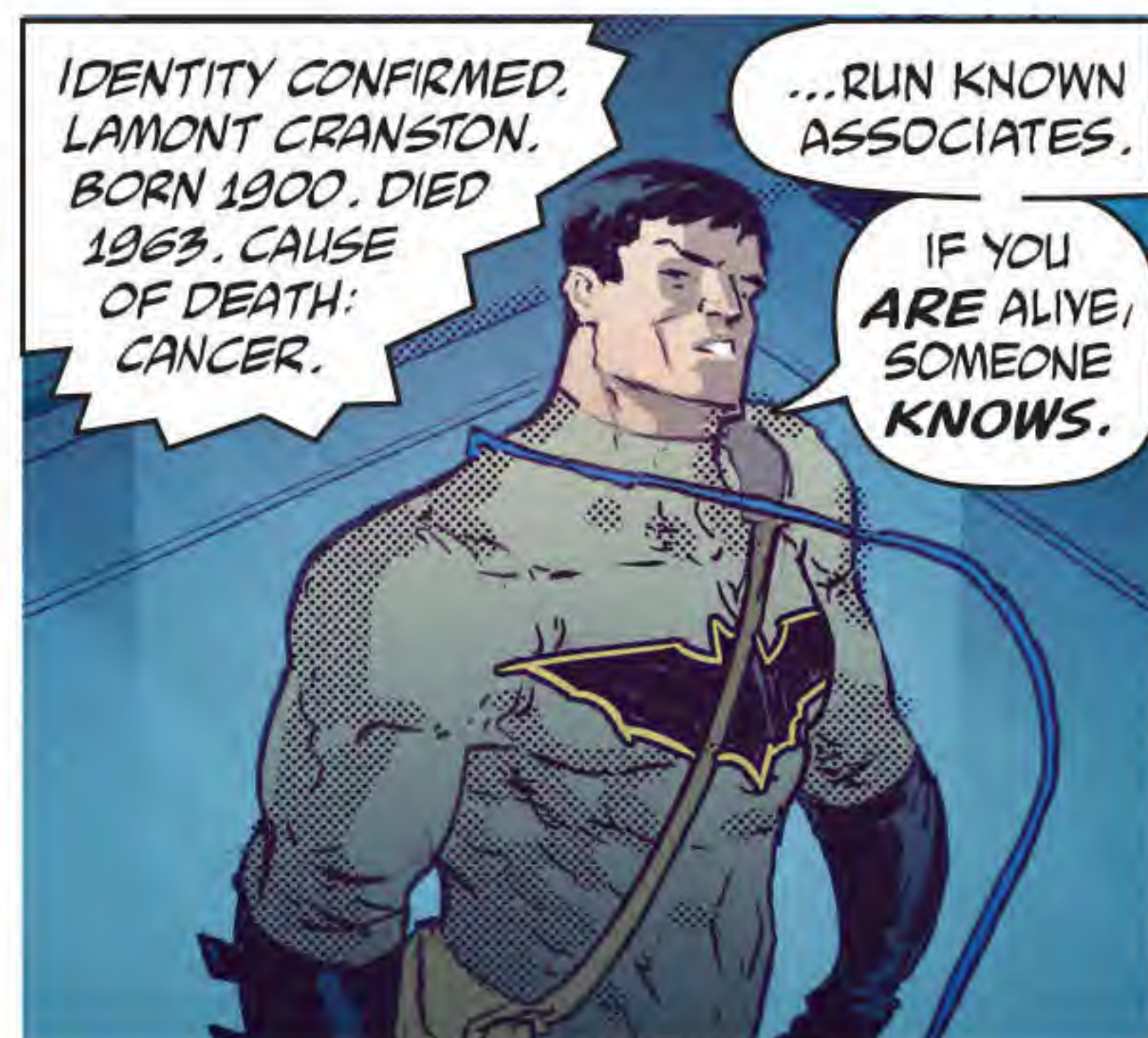
NEWSPAPER
RECORDS.
MICROFICHE--

POSITIVE.
MATCH FOUND.



IDENTITY
CONFIRMED:
LAMONT
CRANSTON.

...NO. RUN IT
AGAIN.



IDENTITY CONFIRMED.
LAMONT CRANSTON.
BORN 1900. DIED
1963. CAUSE
OF DEATH:
CANCER.

...RUN KNOWN
ASSOCIATES.

IF YOU
ARE ALIVE,
SOMEONE
KNOWS.

NEW YORK.

YOU KNEW CRANSTON, MR. VINCENT. **HOW** COULD HE BE ALIVE?

...THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE CALLING HIM? KNEW HIM, **SURE**. HE PULLED THE GUN OUT OF MY MOUTH.

THEN HELD IT OVER MY HEAD FOR **FIFTY YEARS**.

CLYDE BURKE.

SURE, CRANSTON COULD'VE **FAKED** HIS DEATH. WOULD'A MADE A GREAT **BYLINE** FOR ME.

CLIFF MARSLAND. FIGHTER PILOT. THE GREAT WAR. DIED 1963-- SAME YEAR AS CRANSTON.

ONLY ONE COMES **HERE** ANYMORE IS ME.

AND WHY IS **THAT**, MISS SHREVNITZ?

DAD'S BURIED HERE. HE DROVE FOR CRANSTON FOR YEARS. ALL HOURS. IF THAT OLD BASTARD'S ALIVE, HE AIN'T **HERE**.

HE KNOWS NOT TO BOTHER MY DAD WHILE **I'M** AROUND.



WHAT BRINGS YOU TO EAST EGG?

LAMONT CRANSTON. YOU WERE HIS **CLOSEST** ASSOCIATE. AND HIS **LAST**, NOT DEAD OR DISAFFECTED.

YES, WELL...

I **WOULD** BE THE LAST, WOULDN'T I?

YOUR VOICE...YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF ME, MISS LANE.

WHY **WOULD** I BE, BATMAN? I'VE SEEN WORSE THAN **YOU**.

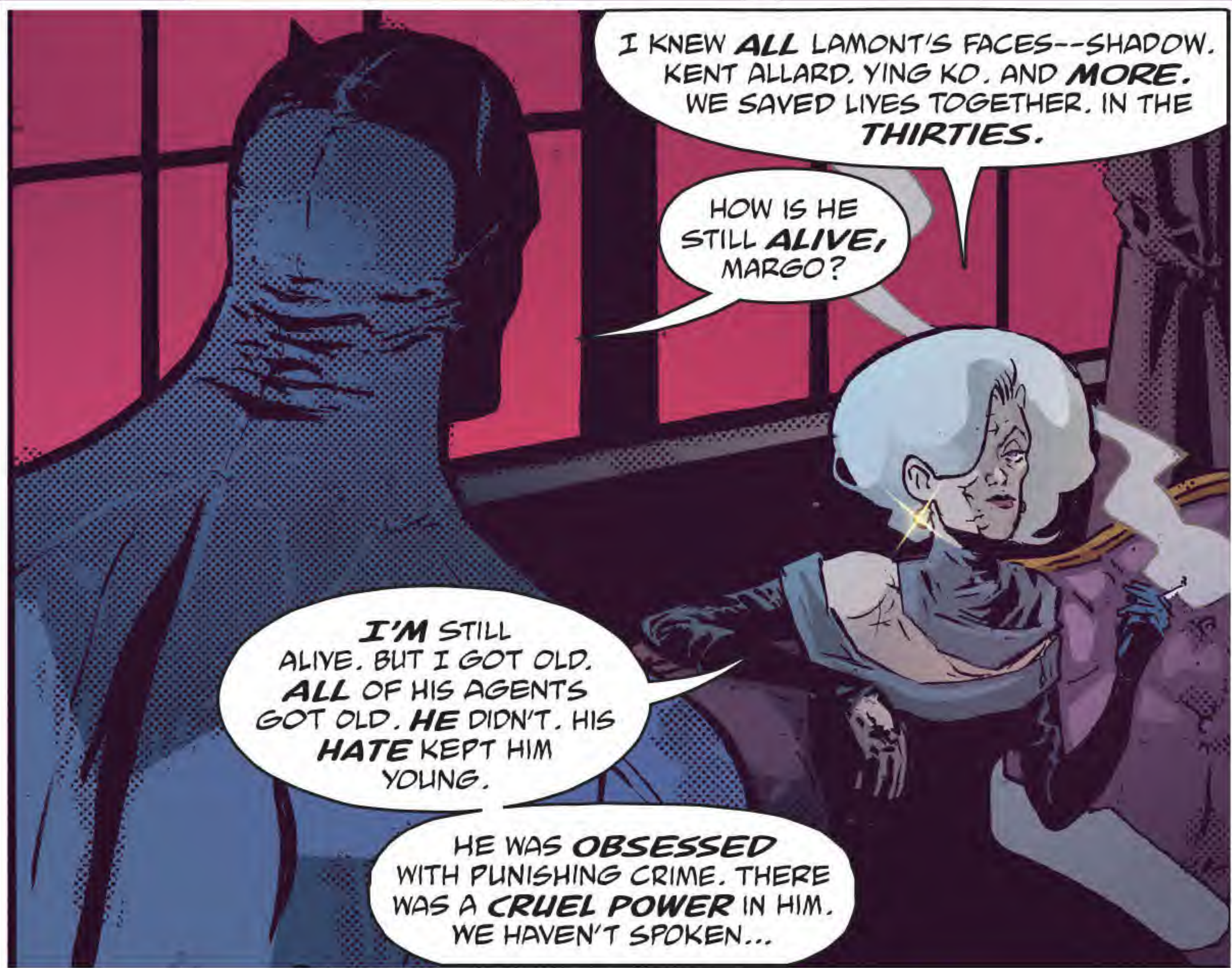


I KNEW **ALL** LAMONT'S FACES--SHADOW, KENT ALLARD, YING KO, AND **MORE**. WE SAVED LIVES TOGETHER. IN THE **THIRTIES**.

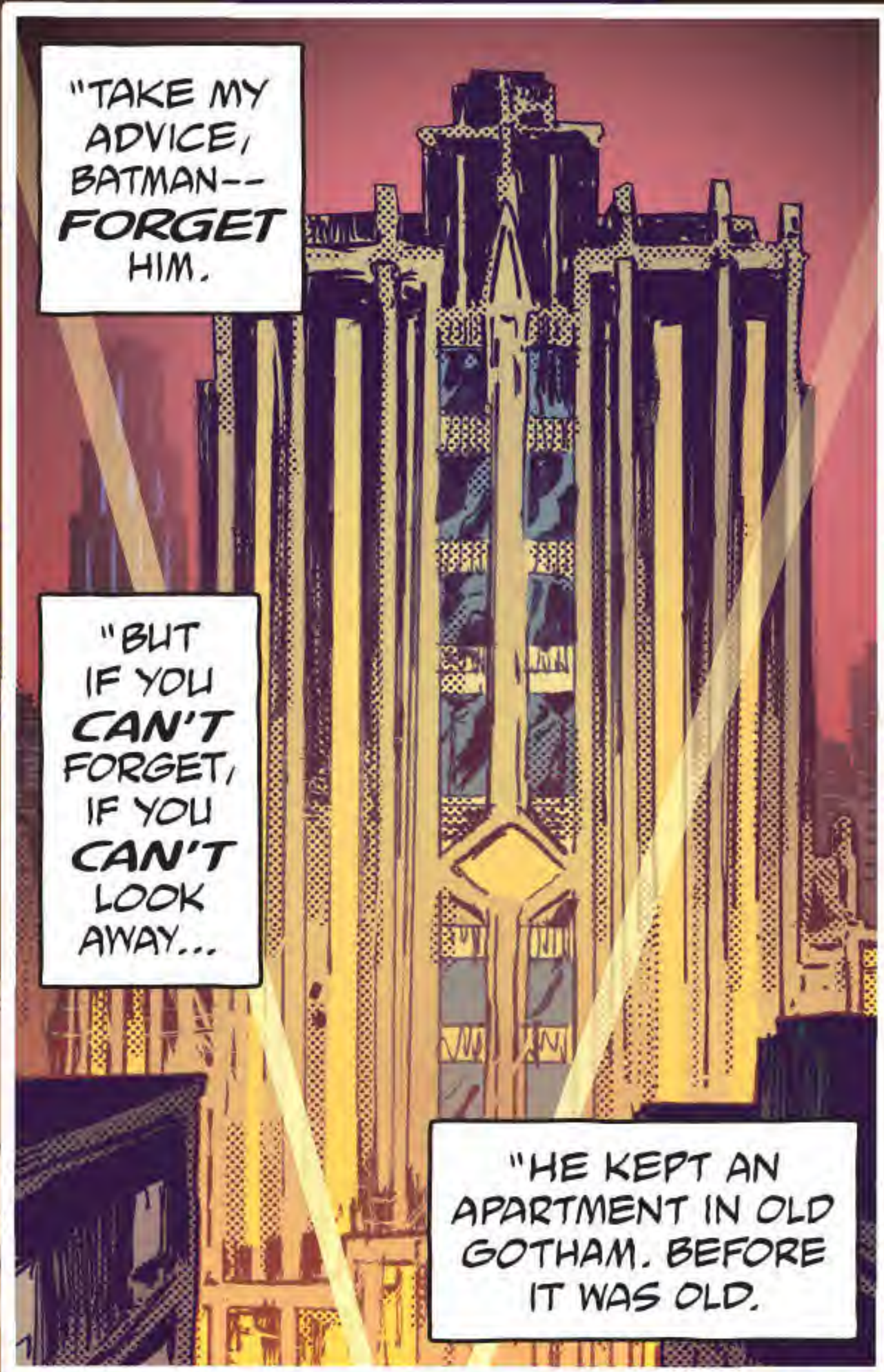
HOW IS HE STILL **ALIVE**, MARGO?

I'M STILL ALIVE. BUT I GOT OLD. **ALL** OF HIS AGENTS GOT OLD. **HE** DIDN'T. HIS **HATE** KEPT HIM YOUNG.

HE WAS **OBSESSED** WITH PUNISHING CRIME. THERE WAS A **CRUEL POWER** IN HIM. WE HAVEN'T SPOKEN...



...SINCE HE TOLD US TO CALL HIM BY A **NEW NAME**. **MASTER**.



"TAKE MY
ADVICE,
BATMAN--
FORGET
HIM.

"BUT
IF YOU
CAN'T
FORGET,
IF YOU
CAN'T
LOOK
AWAY...

"HE KEPT AN
APARTMENT IN OLD
GOTHAM. BEFORE
IT WAS OLD.

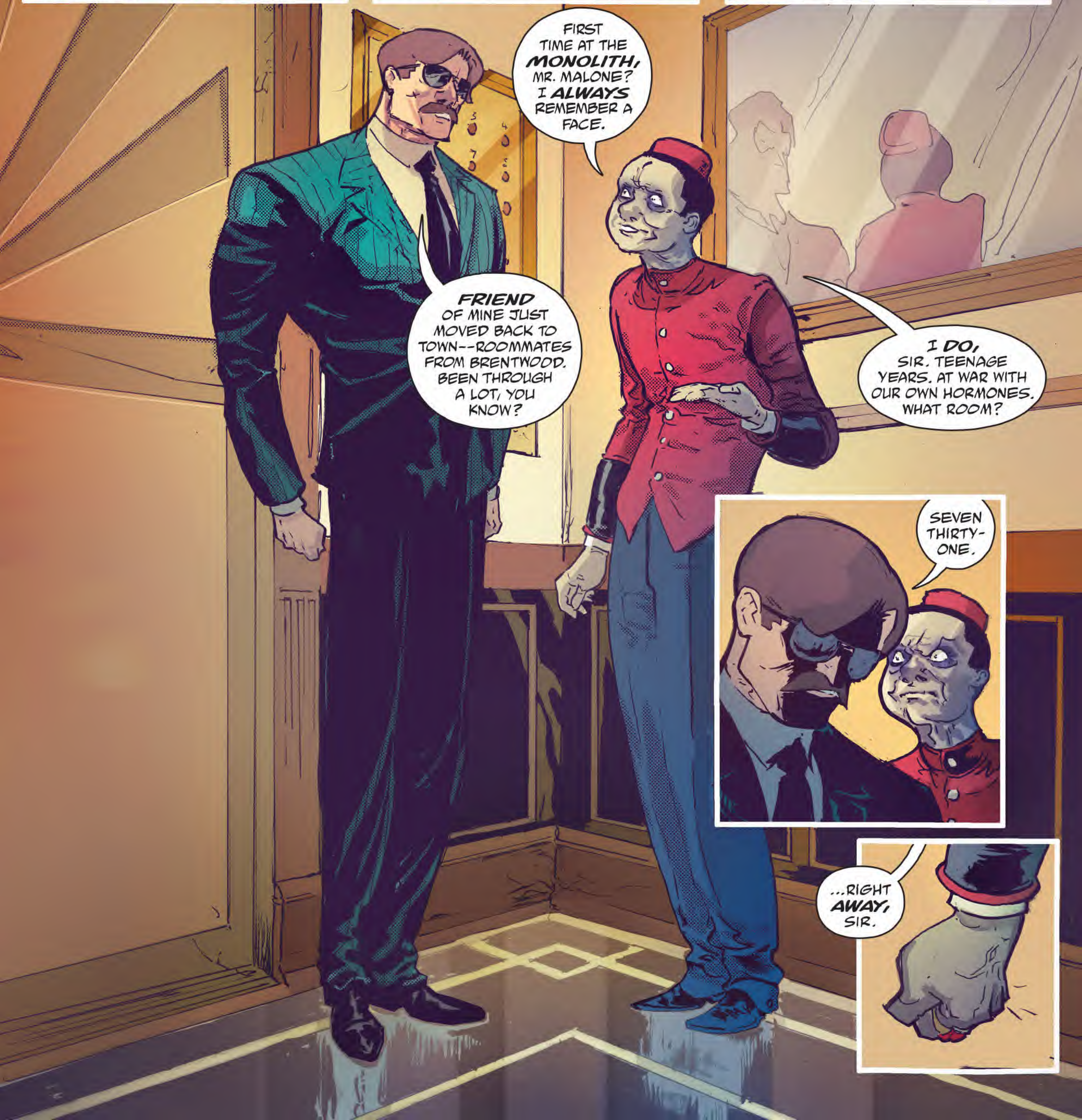


"THE MONOLITH
BUILDING. ROOM 731."



EVENING,
MISTER...?

MALONE.



FIRST
TIME AT THE
MONOLITH,
MR. MALONE?
I **ALWAYS**
REMEMBER A
FACE.

FRIEND
OF MINE JUST
MOVED BACK TO
TOWN--ROOMMATES
FROM BRENTWOOD.
BEEN THROUGH
A LOT, YOU
KNOW?

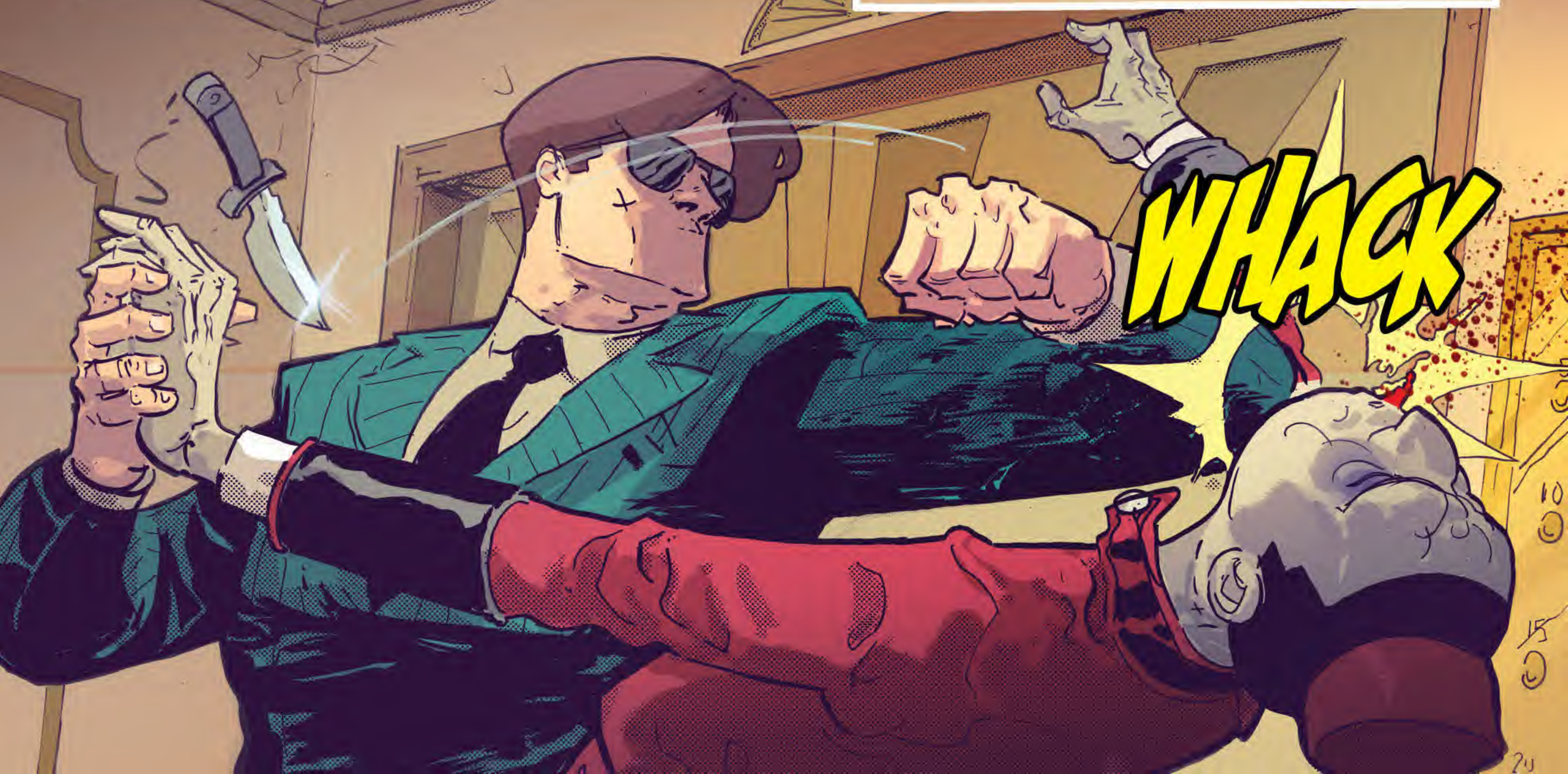
I DO,
SIR. TEENAGE
YEARS. AT WAR WITH
OUR OWN HORMONES.
WHAT ROOM?



SEVEN
THIRTY-
ONE.

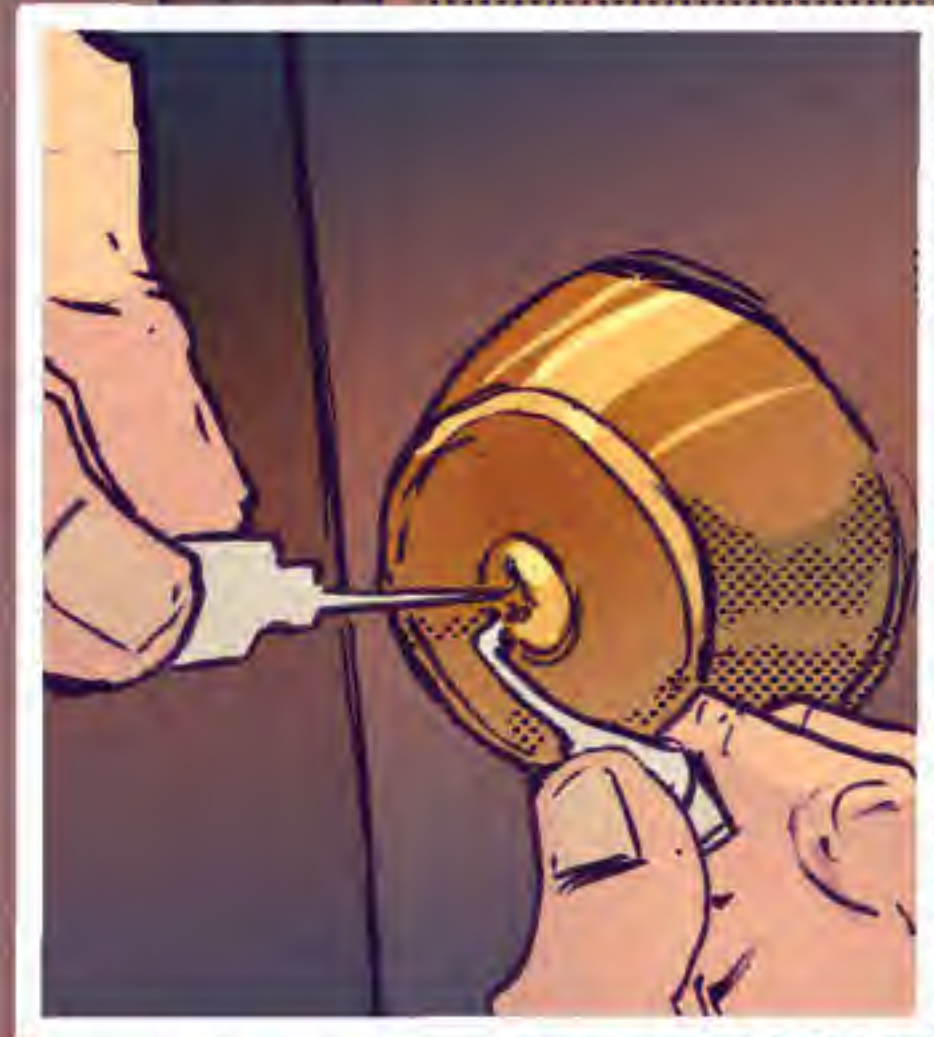
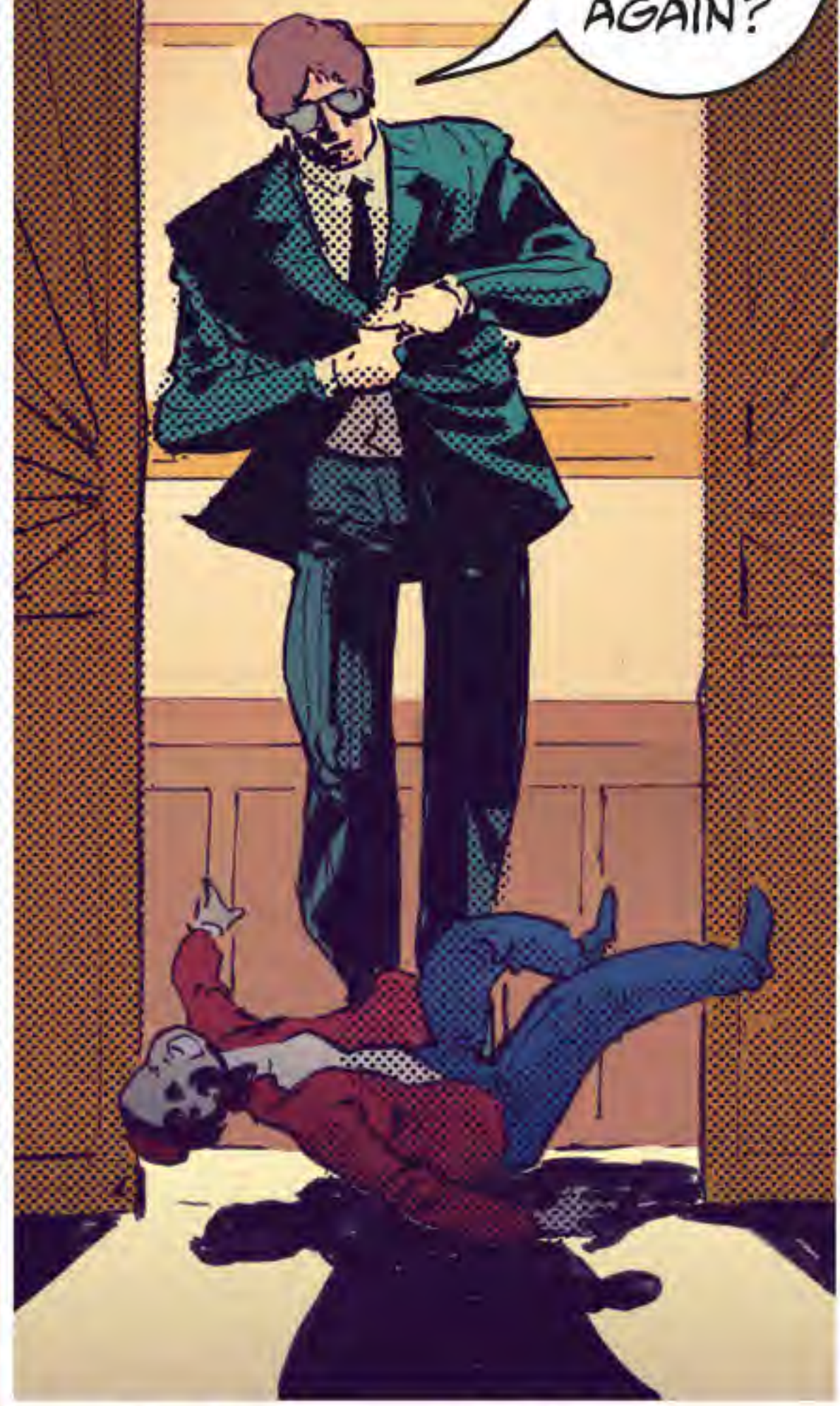
...RIGHT
AWAY,
SIR.





THUD

WHAT WAS THAT THE MASTER SAID AGAIN?



HERE WE ARE...

...731.



PATRICK WAYNE. "NO WORLD IS BEYOND OUR REACH EXCEPT THAT WHICH WE TURN AWAY FROM."



DON'T WORRY, GRAND-FATHER. I'M **NOT** TURNING AWAY.

NOW. LET'S SEE WHERE THE **REAL** CRANSTON'S HIDING.



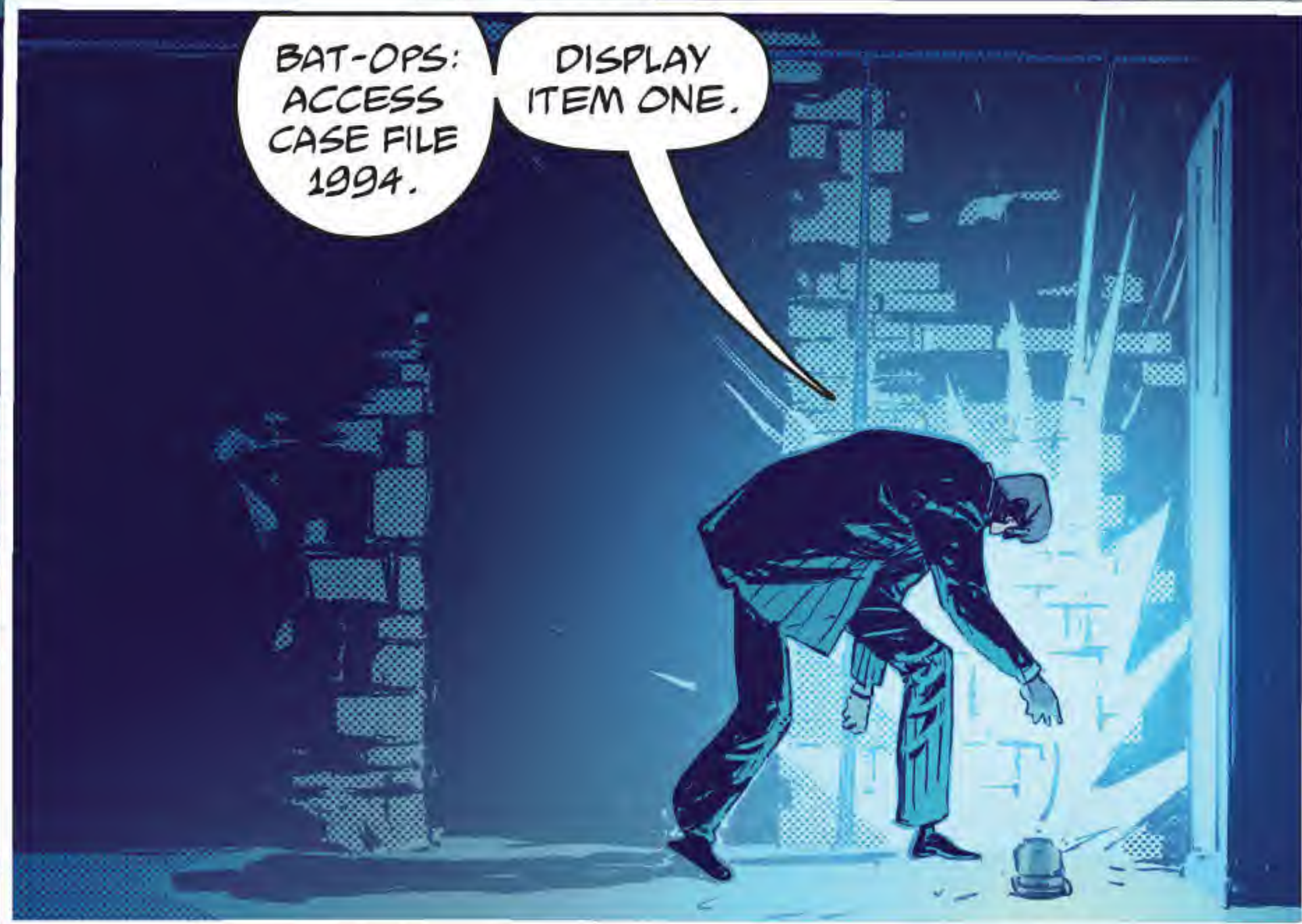




THIS ARMORY...
YOU WERE FIGHTING A
WAR OUT OF HERE,
CRANSTON...

BAT-OPS:
ACCESS
CASE FILE
1994.

DISPLAY
ITEM ONE.



IT'S A MATCH.
I **ALREADY**
SEE IT. BUT GO
AHEAD.

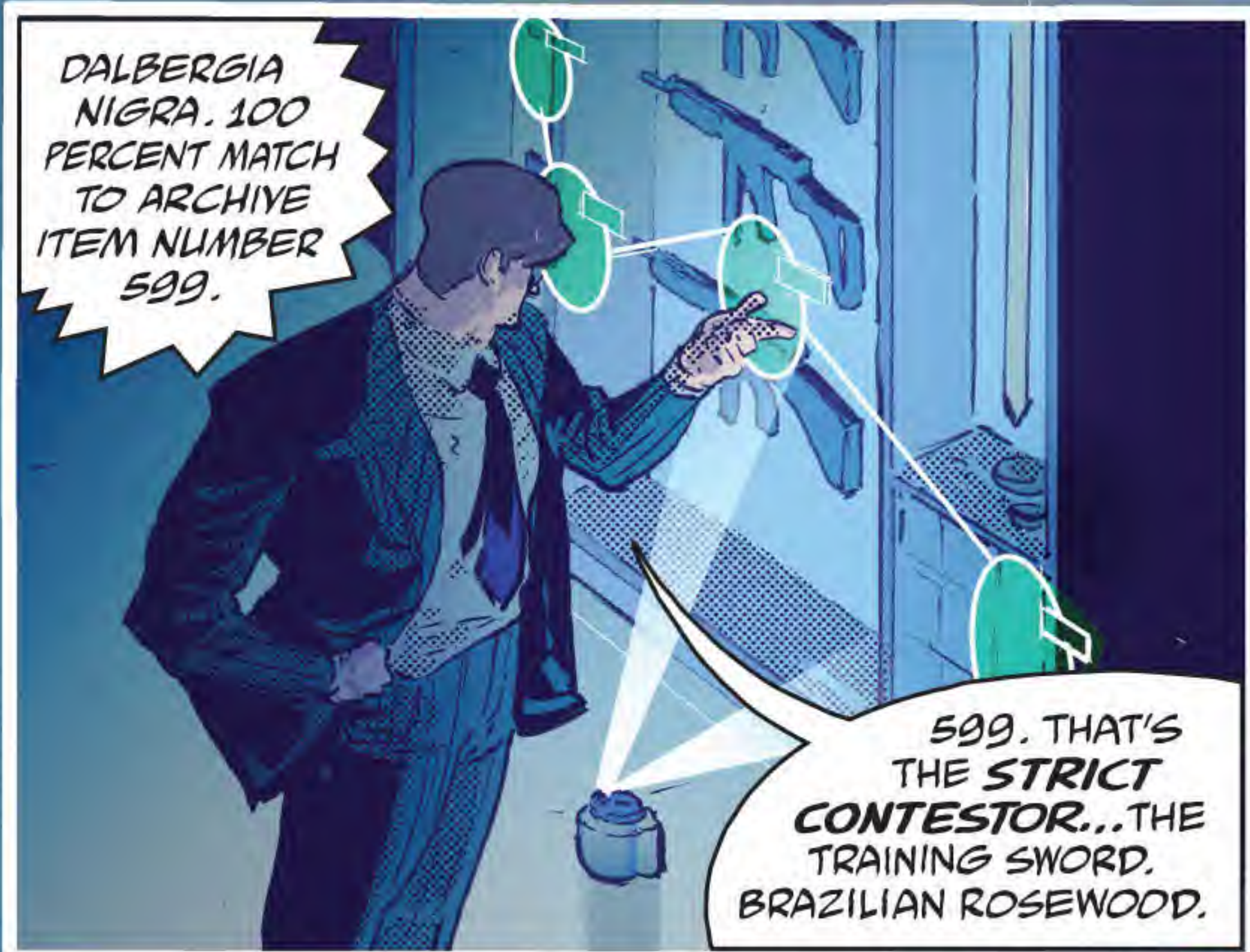
CONFIRMED,
BAT-1. PENETRATING SCAN
SHOWS 99 PERCENT MATCH.

UPDATING. NEW INFORMATION.
ARCHIVE MATCH FOUND.

WHAT?



DALBERGIA
NIGRA. 100
PERCENT MATCH
TO ARCHIVE
ITEM NUMBER
599.



599. THAT'S
THE **STRICT**
CONTESTOR...THE
TRAINING SWORD.
BRAZILIAN ROSEWOOD.

ONE OF
THE RAREST,
HARDEST SPECIES
OF WOOD IN THE
WORLD...





"...BUT
I'VE SEEN
IT BEFORE."

THE
FRENCH
ALPS.
NOW.

I HUNTED
A MAN LONG
DEAD, DUCARD.
KNOW WHAT I
FOUND?

A FACE
UNCHANGED
FOR DECADES. THE
BONES OF A GLOBAL
CRIME-FIGHTING
NETWORK.

WHOLE
FAMILIES
DEDICATING THEIR
LIVES TO A MAN
THEY CALL THE
MASTER.

SAFE HOUSES
IN NEW YORK,
GOTHAM, HUB CITY.
ALIASES. TROPHIES.
FACES.
WEAPONRY.

AND A
STRICT CONTESTOR
IDENTICAL TO THE
ONE WE MADE
TOGETHER, **YEARS**
AGO, WHEN I WAS YOUR
STUDENT.

QUITE
A **STORY**,
BRUCE.



I ASKED YOU TO HELP
ME SOLVE A **MYSTERY**,
DUCARD. AND YOU
CAN.

**LAMONT
CRANSTON** KILLED
HIS OWN DESCENDANT.
HE'S KILLED BEFORE. I
KNOW YOU TRAINED
HIM, HENRI. HELP
ME FIND HIM.



HELP ME FIND **THE
SHADOW.**



»CHK«

THAT WOODEN
SWORD. THE STRICT
CONTESTOR.

IT WAS ALL IT
TOOK FOR ME TO
BEAT YOU BACK
THEN, BRUCE.



I CAN STILL SEE YOU
FUMBLING WITH THE CHISEL
AND PLANES, **GOUGING**
THE WOOD.

YOU WERE
DESPERATE
TO MAKE ONE OF
YOUR OWN.



BUT YOU WERE
CUTTING **AGAINST**
THE GRAIN. WORKING
AGAINST YOURSELF.

YOU'VE NEVER
STOPPED
WORKING AGAINST
THE GRAIN...



BRUCE, YOU THINK
CRANSTON WAS MY
STUDENT?

YOU SEEK THE
SHADOW?

DON'T
WORRY...





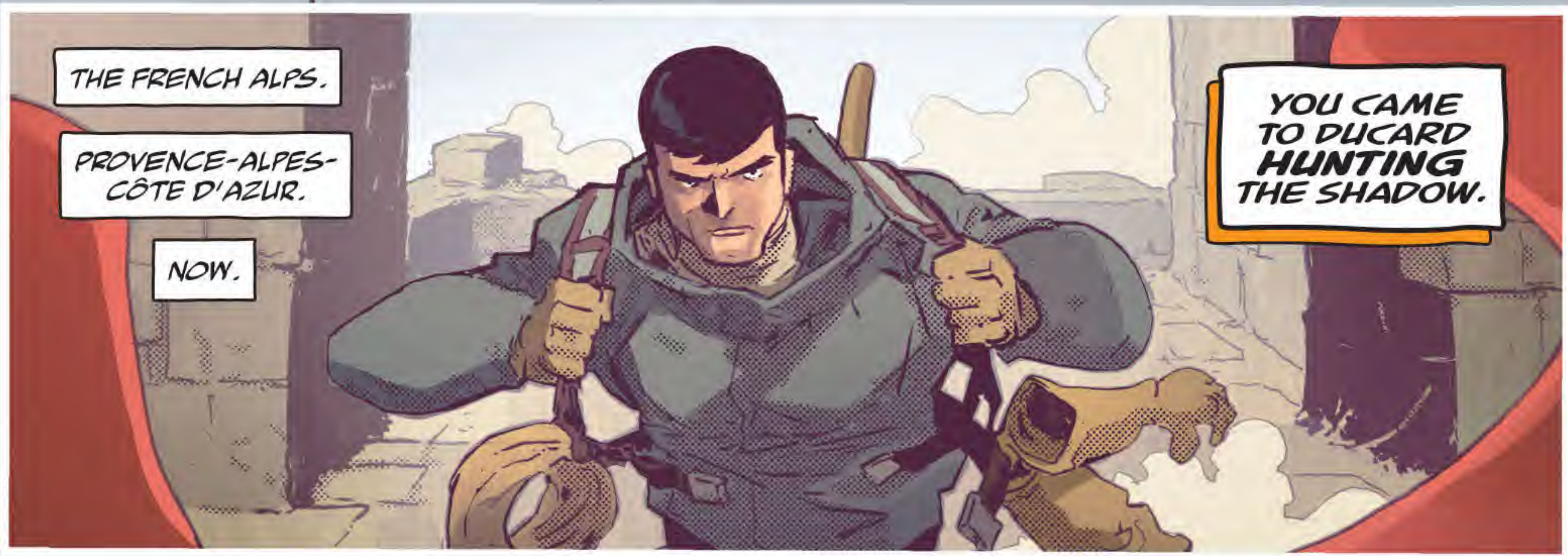
HE'S
CLOSER
THAN YOU
THINK.

PRIZ
Ivan

NEXT: THE SHADOW
OF THE BAT.







THE FRENCH ALPS.

PROVENCE-ALPES-
CÔTE D'AZUR.

NOW.

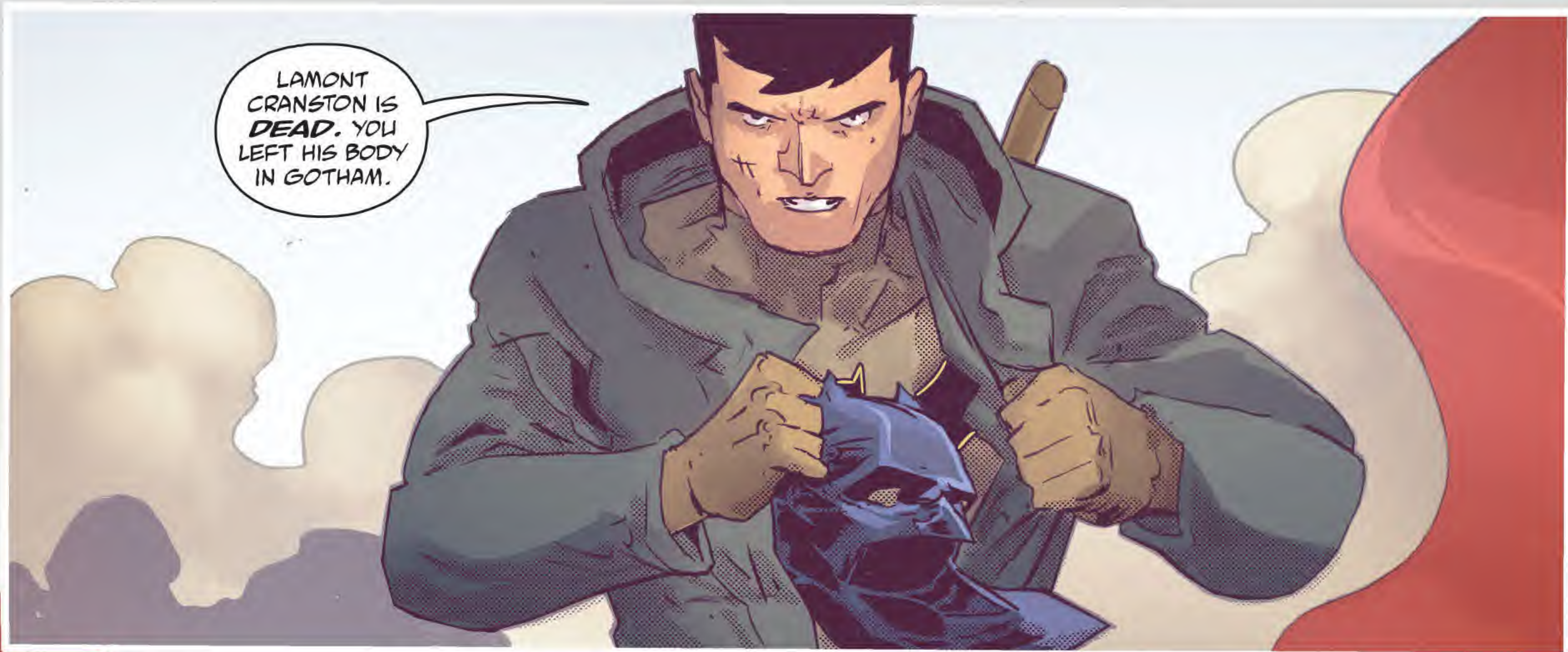
YOU CAME
TO DUCARD
HUNTING
THE SHADOW.



INSTEAD, YOU'VE
FOUND HIM,
LIVING **INSIDE**
YOUR MENTOR.

YOU MOVE IN
THE WORLD. THE
WORLD MOVES
AROUND YOU.

I'VE ALWAYS
BEEN HERE,
BATMAN.
BEHIND YOU.



LAMONT
CRANSTON IS
DEAD. YOU
LEFT HIS BODY
IN GOTHAM.

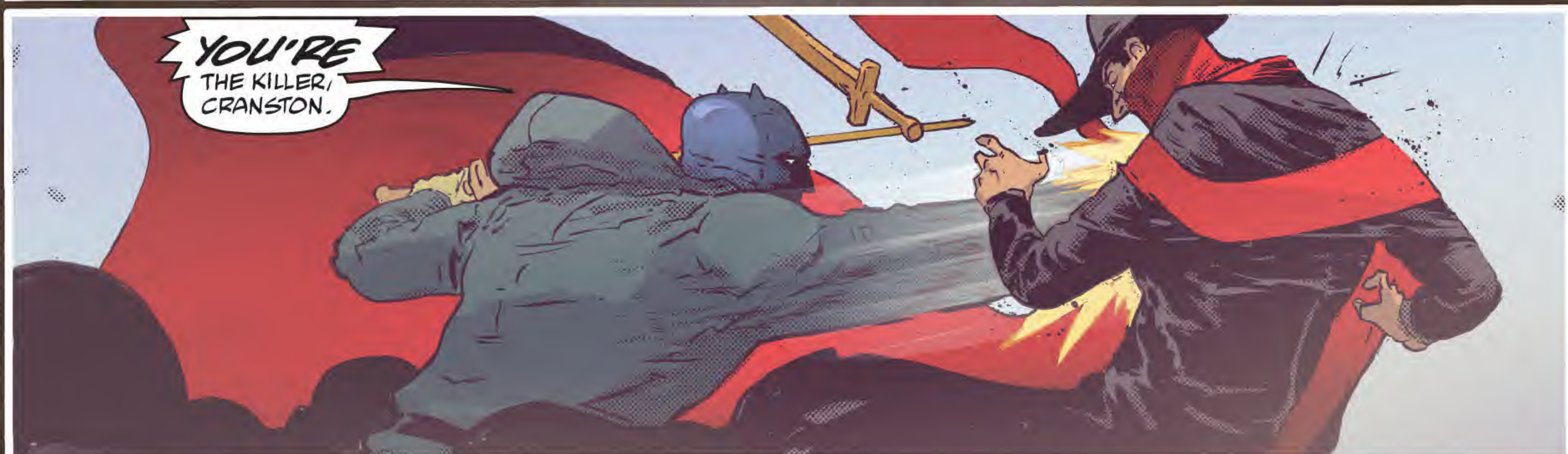


YOU THINK
YOU'VE FOUND
CRANSTON'S
KILLER?

I DON'T
THINK.

I KNOW.





NOT THIS
KILLER, BRUCE.

THE **FIRST**
CRANSTON DIED
DECADES AGO. BUT I
RAN FACIAL RECOGNITION.
YOU'RE A **PERFECT**
MATCH.

WHY KILL YOUR
DESCENDANT?

CRANSTON IS ONE
OF **MANY** FACES
I'VE WORN OVER
THE CENTURIES.



LAZARUS.
DIONYSEUM.
THERE ARE WAYS TO
STAY YOUNG. **EVERY-**
ONE THINKS THEY'RE
A MYSTERY.



I'LL **PROVE**
YOU KILLED
CRANSTON. **PROVE**
WHO YOU ARE.

A WASTE
OF TIME.
CRANSTON'S
KILLER **DOES**
LUCK YOUR
STREETS. AND
HE IS **NOT**
FINISHED.

THE STAG HAS COME
FOR GOTHAM'S BEST,
BRUCE. **REASON**
WILL NOT DEFEAT HIM.



CONVENIENT
ALIBI. BUT I
WON'T PLAY YOUR
GAME.

THIS IS NO GAME.
IT IS A **GLIMPSE**
OF THE WORLD
YOU'VE FOUND...

MY WORLD.

I LIVE MANY LIVES,
ALL BRANCHING OFF
FROM **ONE**--A
LEGENDARY BUTCHER.

HAVING EXHAUSTED ALL
THE **HORRORS** MAN CAN
VISIT UPON HIS BROTHER,
I TURNED MY EYES TO
GREATER POWER.

SHAMBA-LA.
A PROMISED LAND
FOR MEN TO WHOM
DEPRAVITY WAS
LONG MUNDANE.

BUT I DID NOT FIND
POWER THERE. I FOUND
PERSPECTIVE.

I WAS GIVEN A CHOICE, WITH
MY EVERY SIN LAID UPON MY
HEART--LET THE WEIGHT CRUSH
MY SOUL, OR RELIEVE IT BY
PREYING ON MY OWN KIND.

SO THE **SHADOW** WAS
MADE. UNDYING.
UNYIELDING. UNFEELING.
TRAINED TO CLOUD MEN'S
MINDS AND CHARGED TO
PUNISH THE WORST OF
THE WORLD.

FOR ALL
YOUR WARS,
BRUCE, YOU
DO NOT
TRULY
KNOW THE
EVIL THAT
LURKS IN
THE HEARTS
OF MEN.

I DO.

AND THE STAG
WORSHIPS IT.

HIS AIM IS SIMPLE--TO PUNISH THE
WORLD'S BEST, AS I PUNISH ITS WORST.

I HAVE KILLED HIM **HUNDREDS**
OF TIMES, ONLY TO SEE HIM RISE.
YOU CANNOT FIGHT HIM ALONE.

...YOU WANT TO
HELP? START WITH
THE TRUTH. **HOW**
DO YOU KNOW
ABOUT ME?

NO. I
WOULD HAVE
KNOWN.

THE CLOUDED
MIND SEES
NOTHING.

I SHOULD. I
TRAINED YOU FOR
YEARS, THROUGH
DUCARD, AND MY
OTHER FACES.

YOU'RE
EITHER LYING, OR
YOU **KNEW** A KILLER
WAS COMING TO
GOTHAM AND
ALLOWED IT.

SOUNDS
LIKE YOU
COULDN'T FINISH
YOUR **VENDETTA**,
SO YOU USED
MY CITY AS
BAIT.

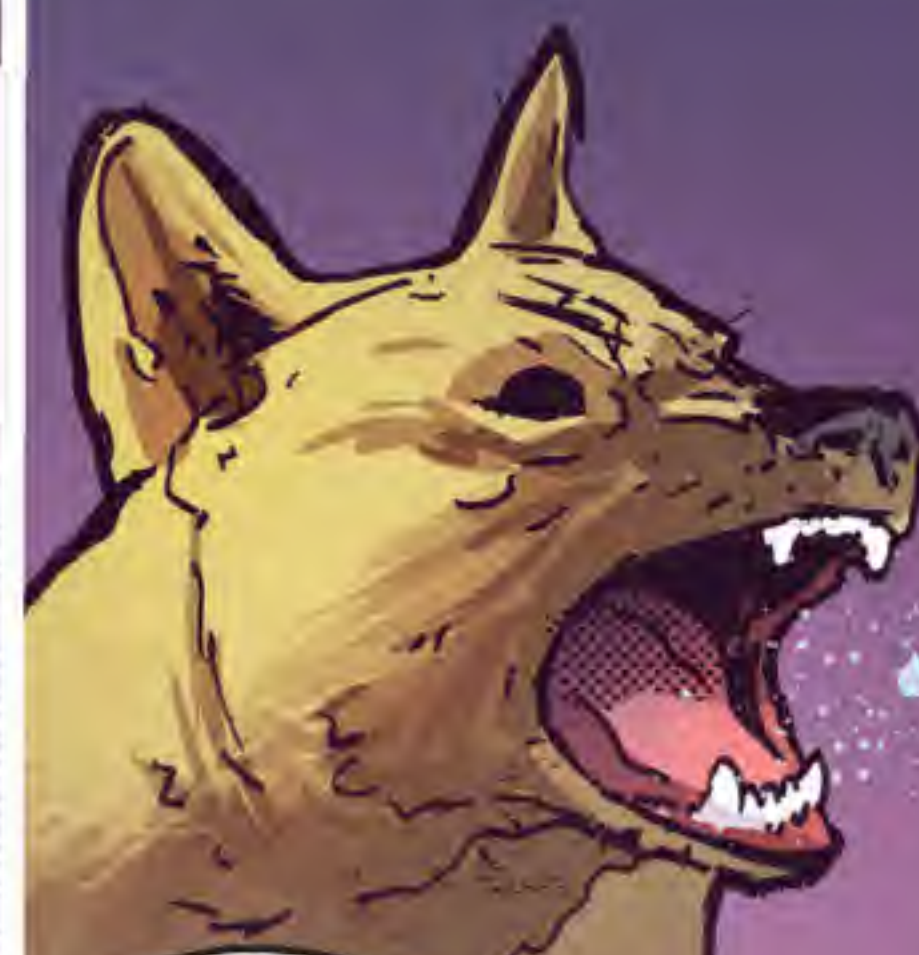
I'LL FIND
CRANSTON'S
KILLER. AND
IF IT'S YOU...
LIES WON'T
STOP ME.

FORTUNATE,
THEN...

**THAT THE
TRUTH IS
ALL I'VE EVER
NEEDED.**



LONG ISLAND,
NEW YORK.



WHAT
MORE CAN
I *GIVE*,
MASTER?

YOU SAVED
MY LIFE, YEAH.
THAT WAS *EIGHTY*
YEARS AGO. WHEN
THE HELL IS MY
DEBT PAID?

YOUR SUFFERING
AT THE YOKE OF
CULPABILITY IS
AN *INSTANT*
NEXT TO MINE.



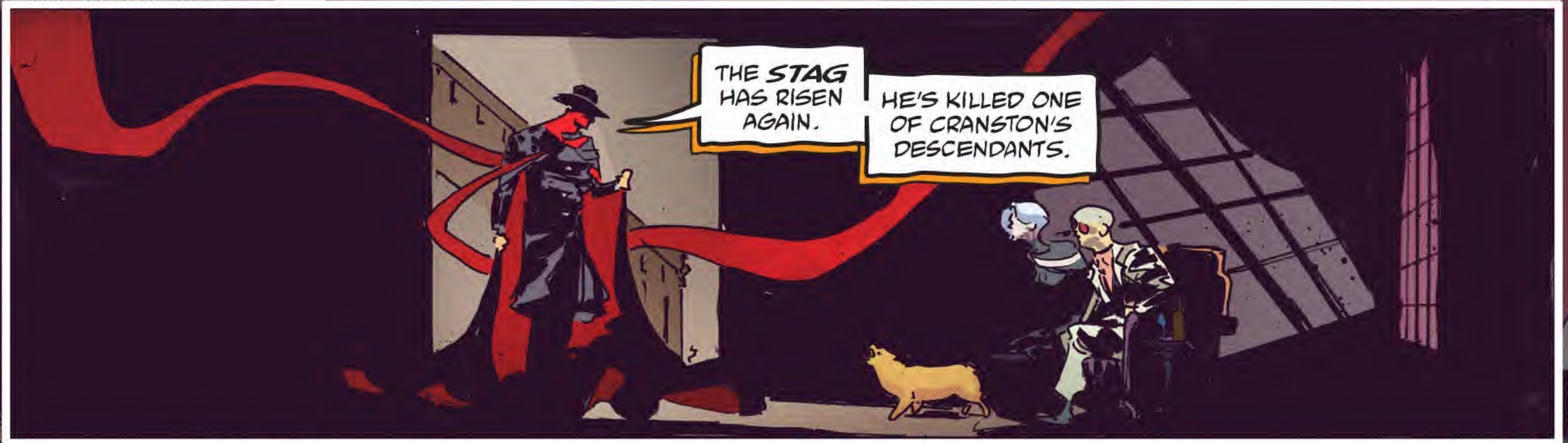
HARRY VINCENT.
MARGO LANE.
YOU LISTEN TO
ME--YOU ARE
BOTH AT RISK.

GOOD
LORD. LISTEN
TO YOURSELF.
WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?



"HARRY VINCENT. MARGO LANE." TALK TO ME
LIKE A *HUMAN*, DAMN IT. AS *LAMONT*.

THIS WARNING IS ONE OF MY
LAST ACTS AS THE MAN YOU
KNEW. HUMANITY IS A *LUXURY*
I CAN NO LONGER AFFORD.



THE **STAG**
HAS RISEN
AGAIN.

HE'S KILLED ONE
OF CRANSTON'S
DESCENDANTS.

YOU...
YOU NEVER
CARED ABOUT
US. OR LAMONT.
YOU **STOLE**
HIS FACE.

IT IS A **MESSAGE**. OUR
WAR REACHES ITS CLIMAX. A
WAR YOU WERE **PART** OF.

YOU'RE **USELESS**
TO ME NOW... BUT... YOU
DESERVED TO KNOW. HE
COULD COME FOR YOU.



YOU **KNEW** THE
FIGHT WOULDN'T END. IF IT
WASN'T THE **STAG**, IT WOULD BE
KHAN, OR **MONSTRADAMUS**,
OR **GOD KNOWS** WHO ELSE.

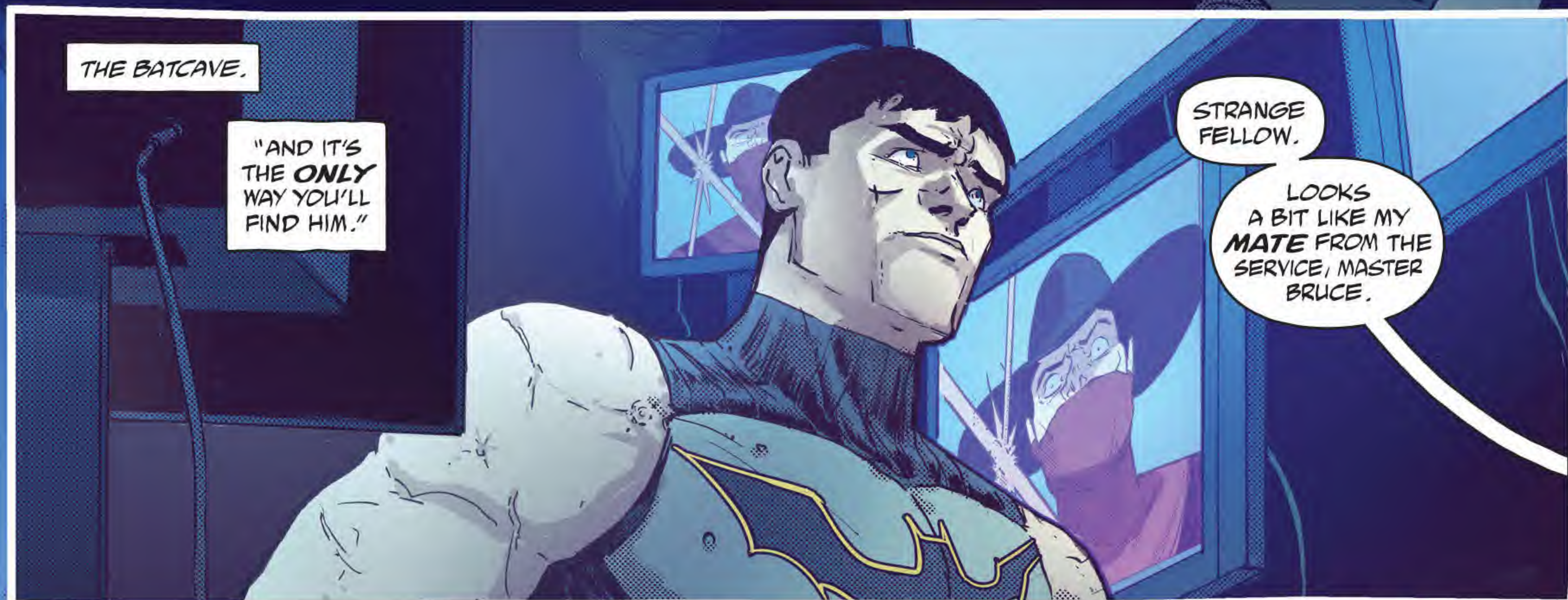
YOU SPENT US
LIKE AMMUNITION.
NOW YOU'RE
TRYING TO DO THE
SAME WITH
BATMAN.

I **KNOW**.
HE VISITED
ME. DON'T
MAKE THE
SAME
MISTAKES YOU
ALWAYS
DO.

YOU DON'T
WANT TO BURY YOUR HUMANITY.
YOU WANT TO REMIND YOUR-
SELF OF IT. AND YOU **NEED** TO.



THE **STAG** ALWAYS
UNDERSTOOD
HUMANITY. THAT'S
HOW HE FOUND
HIS KILLS.



THE BATCAVE.

"AND IT'S THE **ONLY** WAY YOU'LL FIND HIM."

STRANGE FELLOW.

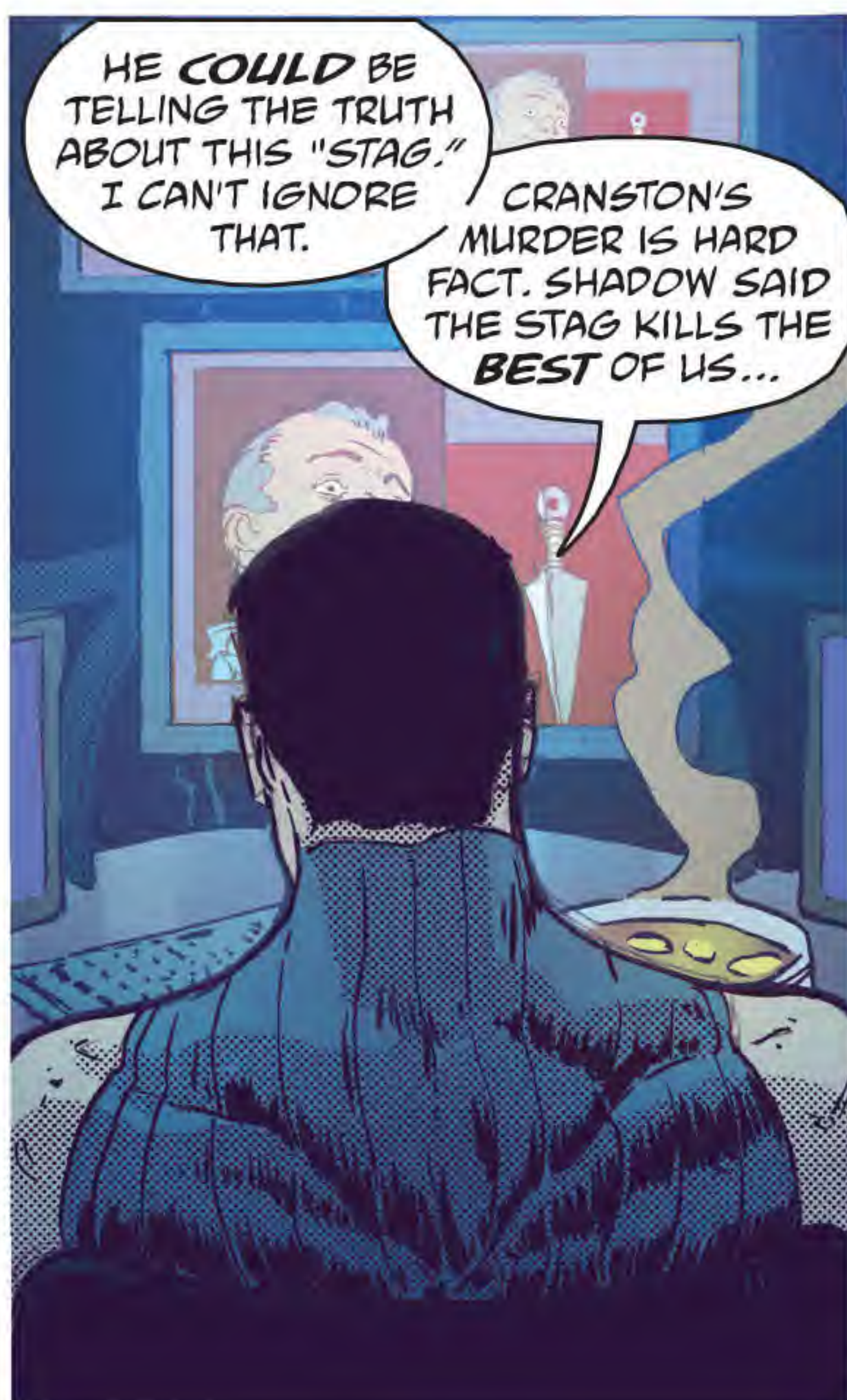
LOOKS A BIT LIKE MY **MATE** FROM THE SERVICE, MASTER BRUCE.

DON'T CALL ME **MASTER**, ALFRED. THAT'S WHAT **HIS** AGENTS CALL HIM.

NO PROGRESS THEN, SIR?

I RECHECKED THE DATA. CRANSTON WAS **NOT** AT THE CRIME SCENE. HE APPEARED FROM **NOTHING**. THERE IS NO WAY HE KNEW MY GRANDFATHER. NO WAY HE IS DUCARD--I **KNEW** HENRY.

THERE HAS TO BE AN **EXPLANATION** FOR HIM. BUT THE EVIDENCE IS CIRCUMSTANTIAL.



HE **COULD** BE TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT THIS "STAG." I CAN'T IGNORE THAT.

CRANSTON'S MURDER IS HARD FACT. SHADOW SAID THE STAG KILLS THE **BEST** OF US...



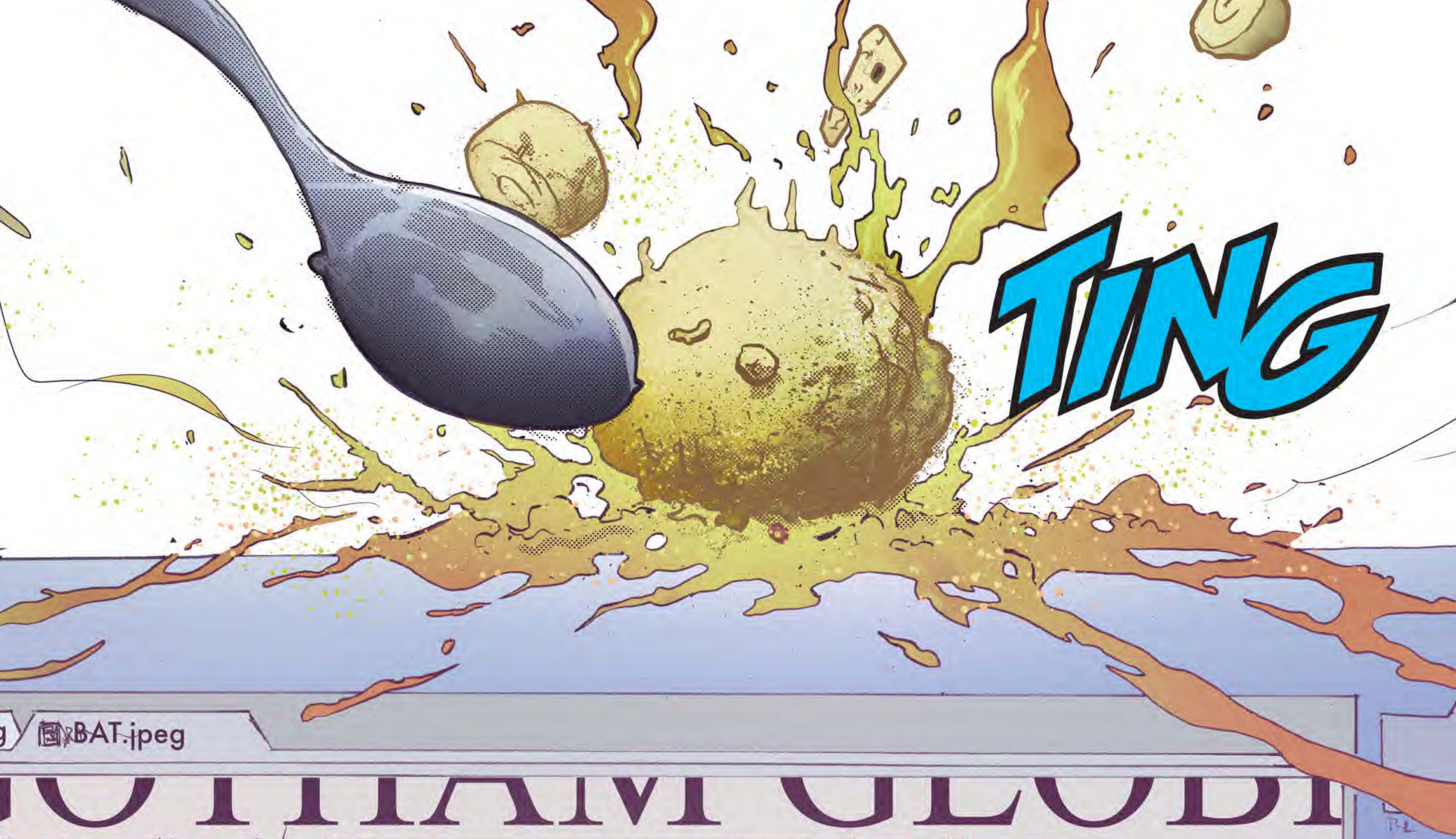
CRANSTON WAS **BELOVED**. HIS WORK IN ARKHAM WON HIM A GOTHAM HUMANE AWARD ON WRITE-IN. BUT THE OTHER WINNERS ARE STILL...

WAIT.



BARRY O'NEILL. THE PHILANTHROPIST. I SAVED HIM **MONTHS** AGO. BUT THEN HE DIED IN A HOME INVASION.

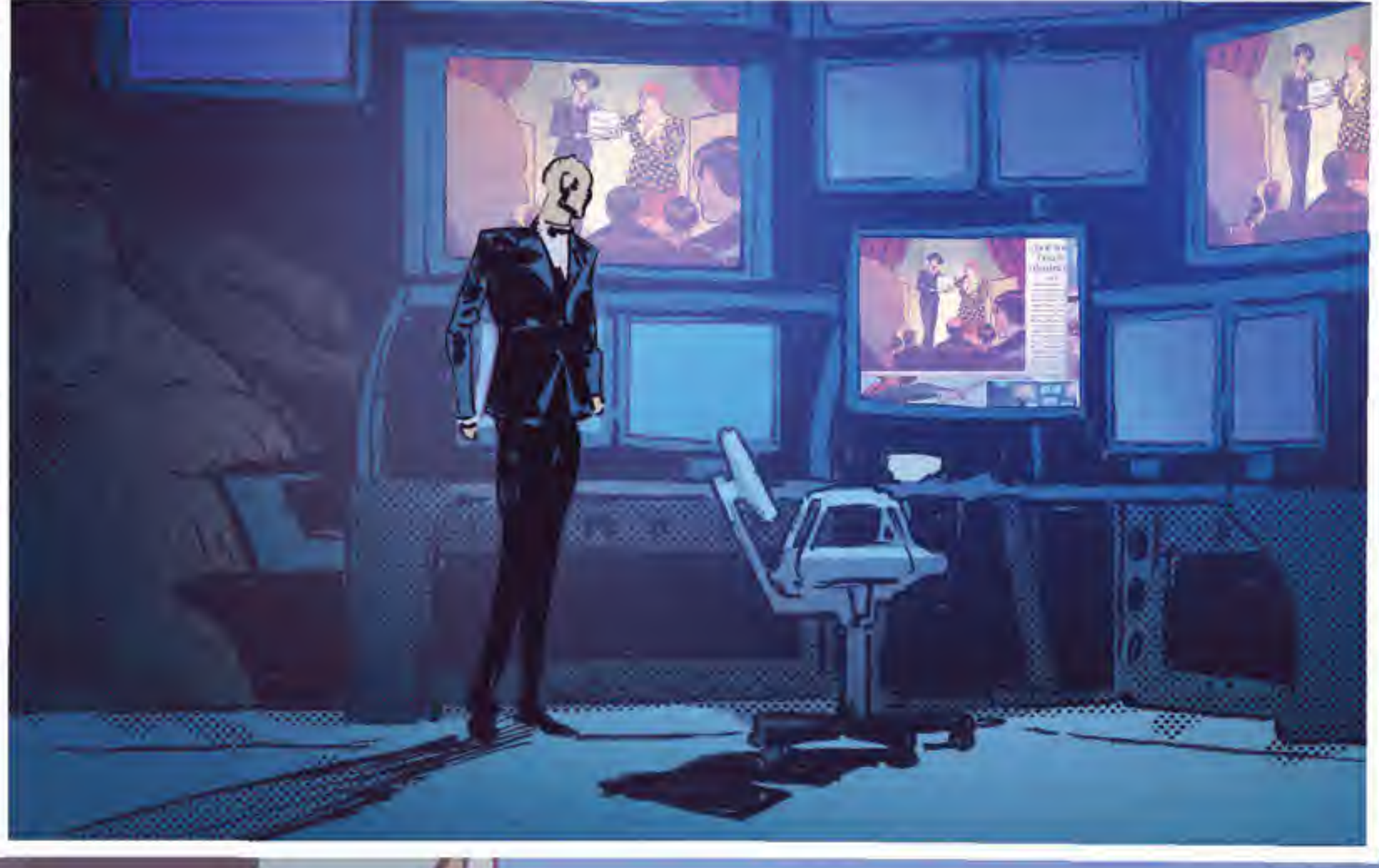
CRANSTON. O'NEILL. **THREE** HUMANE AWARDS ARE GIVEN OUT EACH YEAR. THE THIRD...

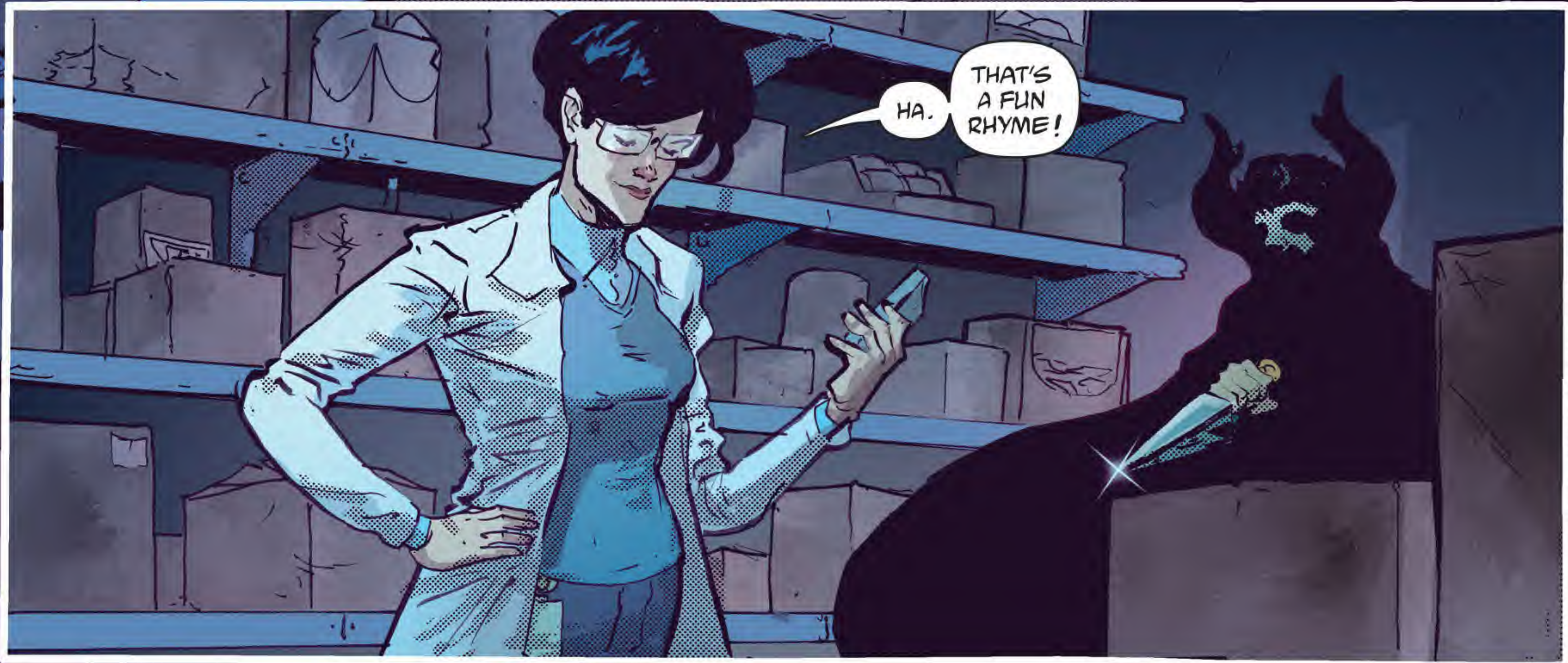


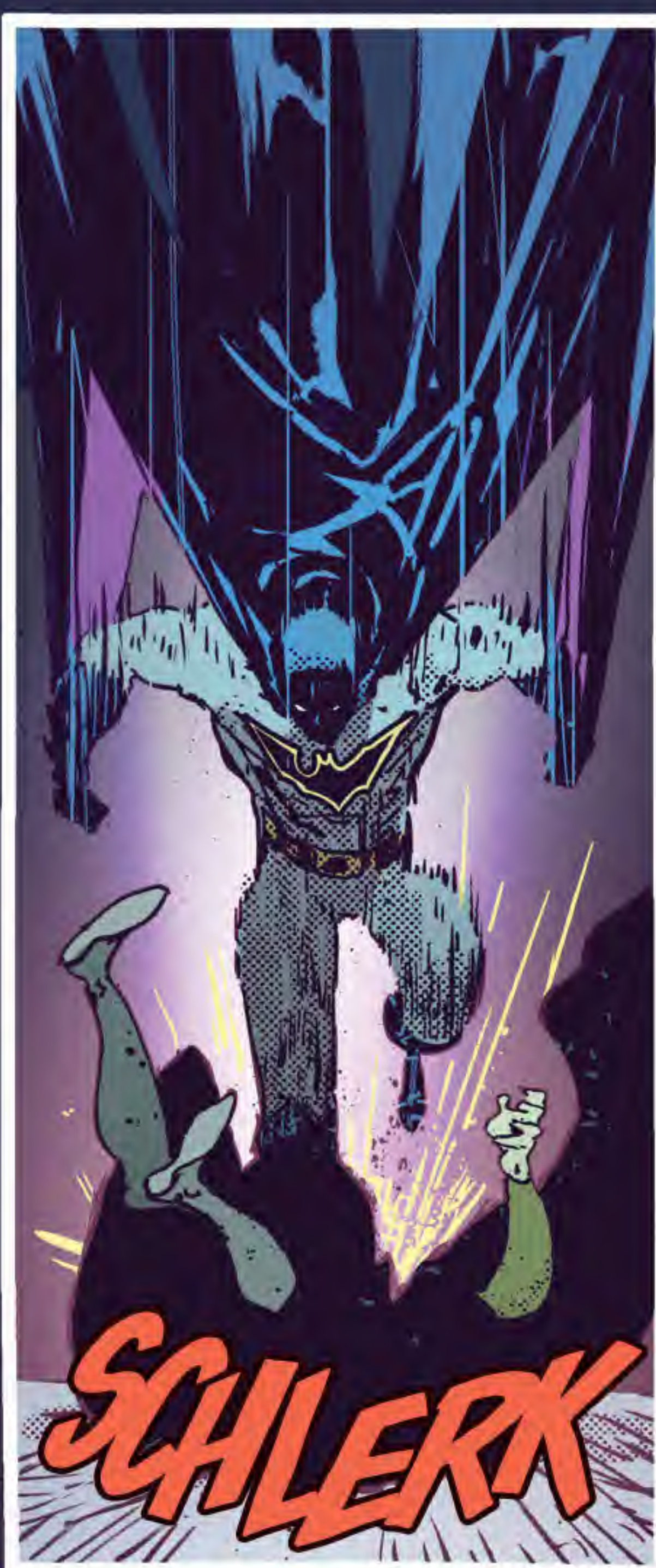
DOCTOR
LESLIE
THOMPSON

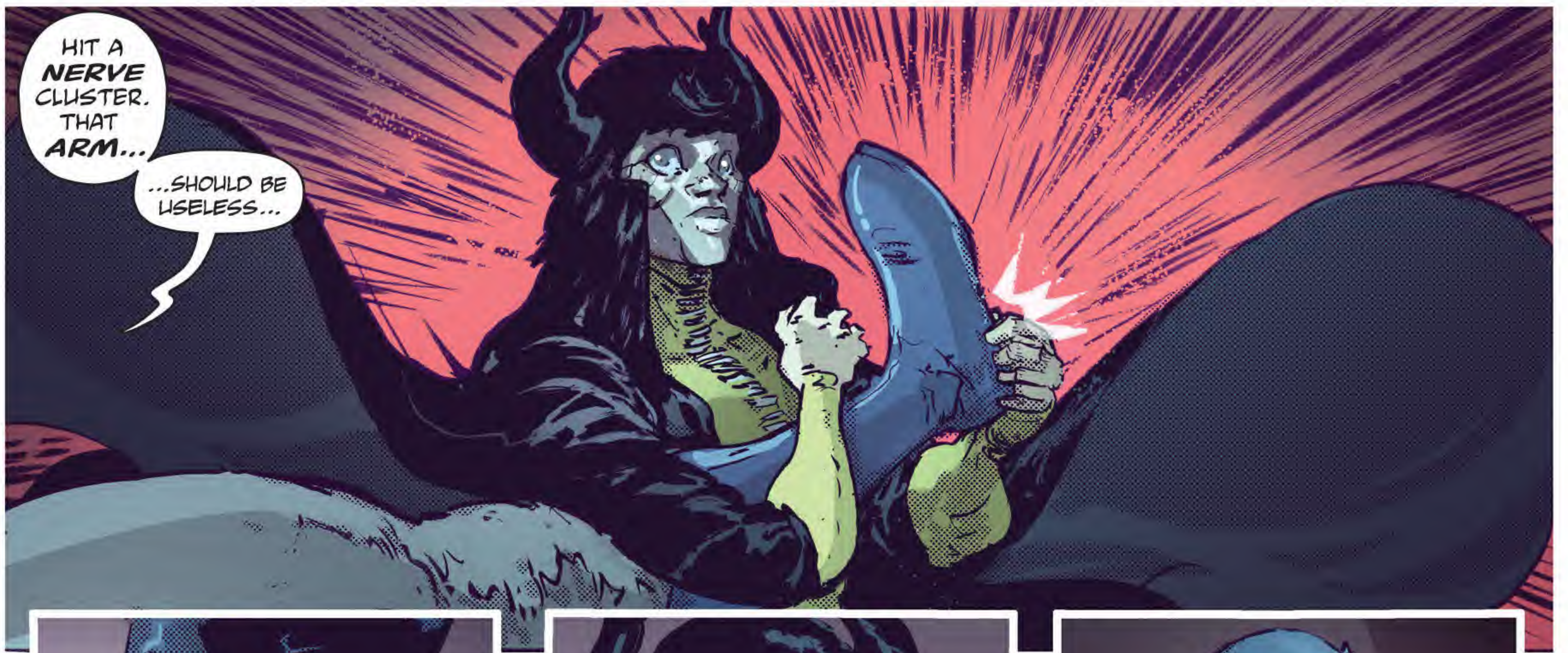
by
Vicky Vale

Lorem ipsum dolor si
consectetur adipiscin
sed do eiusmod temp
didunt ut labore et do
magna aliqua. Ut eni
minim veniam, quis r
exercitation ullamco
nisi ut aliquip ex ea c
do consequat. Duis au
irure dolor in reprehe
in voluptate velit esse
dolore eu fugiat nulla
tur. Excepteur sint oc
cupidatat non proiden
in culpa qui officia de
mollit anim id est lab
Sed ut perspiciatis un









STAND
UP. LET GO OF
BATMAN.

OR I'LL
SHOOT.







STOP!

BANG



WHAT ARE YOU DOING? HOW COULD YOU **FIRE**?

SIMPLE, BATMAN. THERE ARE DEBTS AND **DEATHS** TO BE PAID.



WAIT...YOU **KNEW** THOSE NAMES.

WAS THE SHADOW HERE? DID HE **GET** TO YOU? DID HE TELL YOU TO--

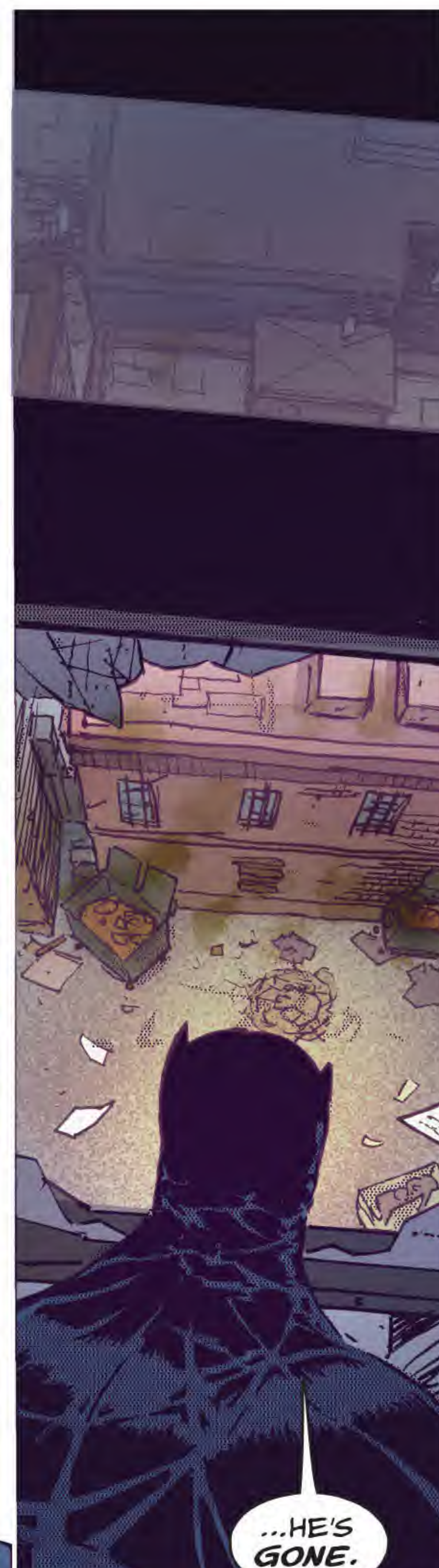


...I AM...

...I AM AN **HONEST SIGNAL**.

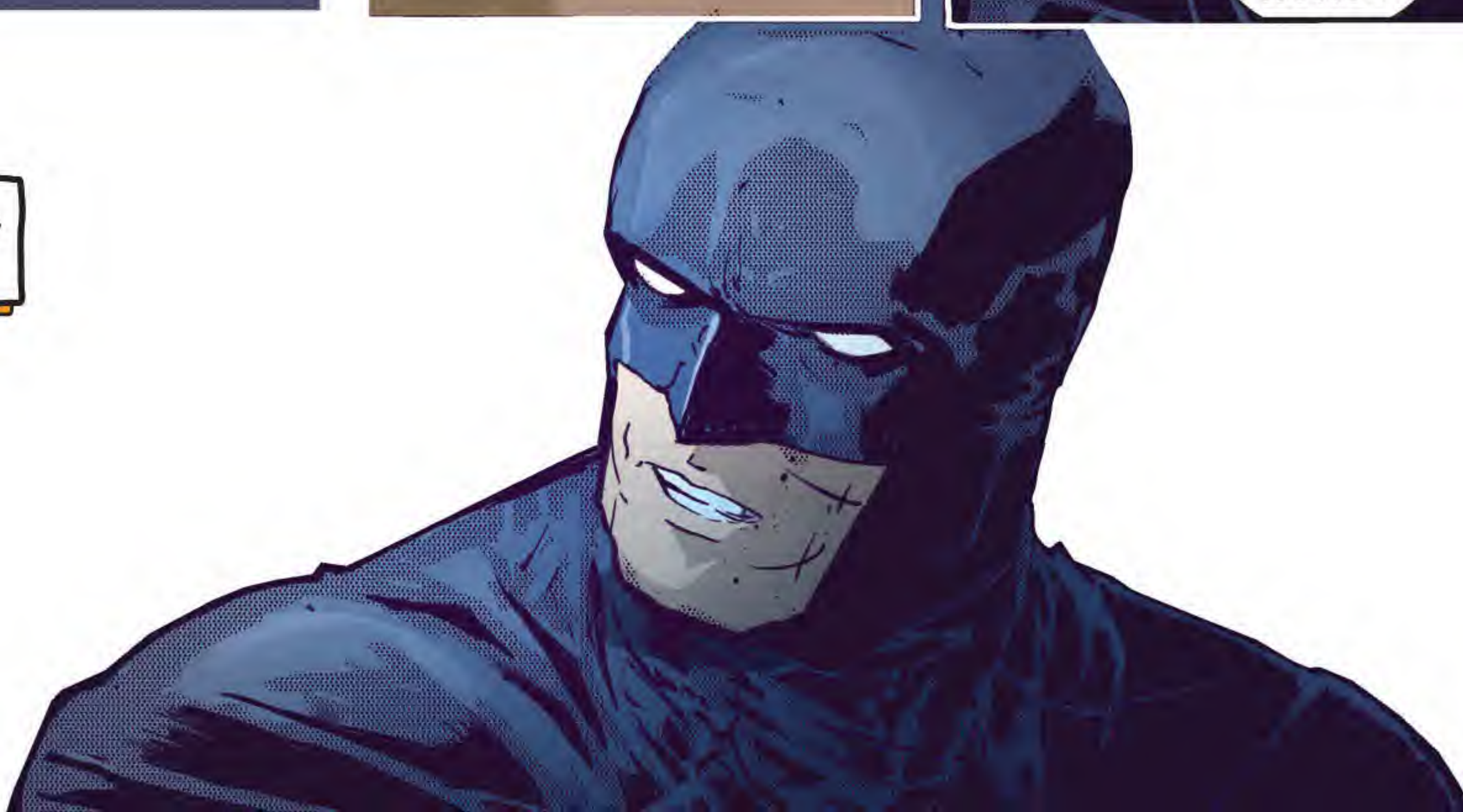


FWOMP



...HE'S **GONE**.

ONCE AGAIN, **BATMAN**...



THE TRUTH
DEFEATS YOU.



WHAT
DID YOU DO TO
LESLIE?!

LESLIE THOMPkins IS
SAFE. ATTENDING TO
ONE OF MY AGENTS.
NONE THE WISER.

THAT'S YOUR
LAST LIE.

DON'T BE A
CHILD. I
TOOK HER
PLACE TO
PROTECT
HER.



YOU
SHOT HIM
THROUGH
THE
HEAD!

I SAW
THE WOUND.
SMELLED THE
BLOOD. **HEARD**
HIM HIT THE
GROUND. HE
SHOULD BE
DEAD.

BUT HE'S
GONE!

I TOLD YOU.
THE **STAG**
CANNOT DIE.





EVERY-
ONE CAN
DIE.

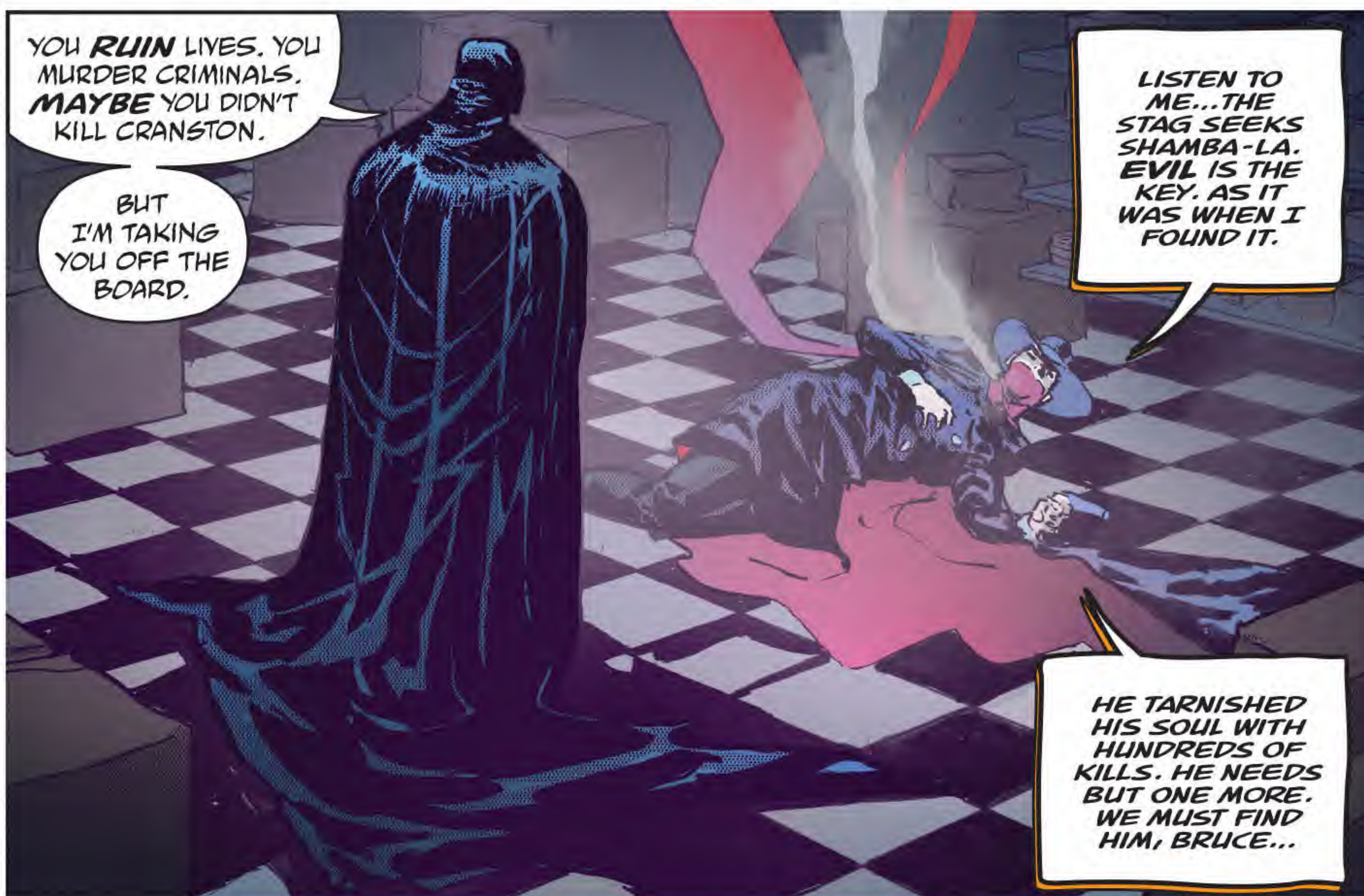
NOT ALL ARE
BOUND BY
MORTAL RULES.
YOU MUST
ACCEPT THAT.
AS YOU MUST
ACCEPT ME.



ZZAT



FZASH

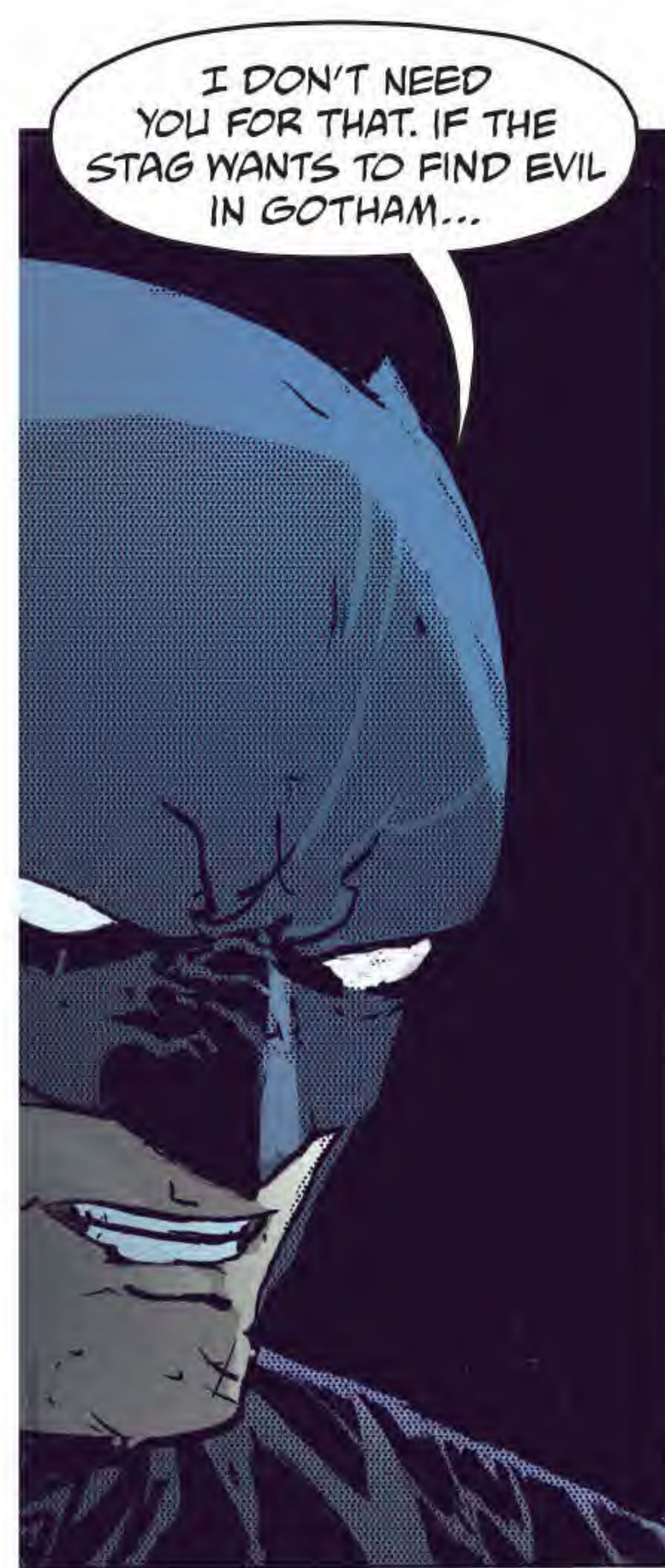


YOU **RUIN** LIVES. YOU
MURDER CRIMINALS.
MAYBE YOU DIDN'T
KILL CRANSTON.

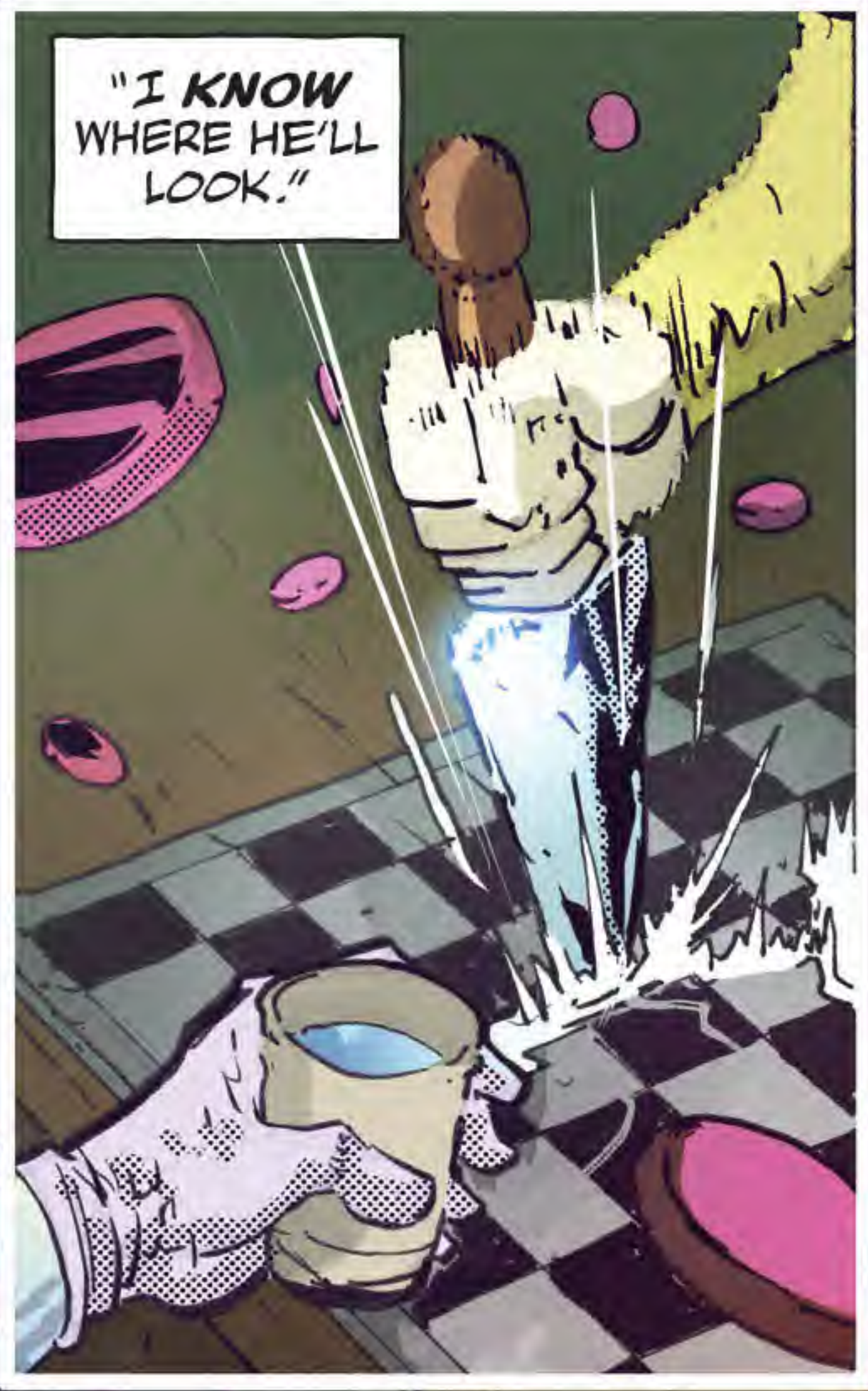
BUT
I'M TAKING
YOU OFF THE
BOARD.

LISTEN TO
ME...THE
STAG SEEKS
SHAMBA-LA.
EVIL IS THE
KEY. AS IT
WAS WHEN I
FOUND IT.

HE TARNISHED
HIS SOUL WITH
HUNDREDS OF
KILLS. HE NEEDS
BUT ONE MORE.
WE MUST FIND
HIM, BRUCE...



I DON'T NEED
YOU FOR THAT. IF THE
STAG WANTS TO FIND EVIL
IN GOTHAM...



"I KNOW
WHERE HE'LL
LOOK."



**NEXT: THE HARLEQUIN
OF HATE**







GOTHAM CITY.
EAST END.

I SEE YOUR
POINT.



YOU'RE
NEW TO THE CITY
AND WANT TO EXPLORE
WHAT THE TOWN HAS
TO OFFER.

YOU WANT
TO OPEN UP GOTHAM'S
BEST AND SEE WHAT'S
INSIDE? **HINT--**
IT'S **PINK**.



YOU WANT SOME **LOCALLY**
SOURCED MAYHEM. AND
IN RETURN, I GET A TRIP
TO **SHAMBA-LA**?

WELL, LET ME
TELL YOU. I'D **KILL**
TO GET TO THAT
PROMISED LAND.



SO
WHAT'S **MY**
END OF THE
DEAL?

GOTHAM
HARBOR.

"THE STAG.
EXPLAIN."

"BUT I WAS MADE TO CHANGE."

"I REFUTED HIS PHILOSOPHY OF
PURE SELF-INTEREST. OF EVIL.
I BECAME THE SHADOW."

"I WAS ONCE
LIKE HIM.
SERVANT ONLY
TO MY OWN
DARK WHIMS."

"AND FOR *THAT*,
THE STAG LOATHES
ME MOST OF ALL."

"I KNOW THE
FEELING. WHY
GOTHAM?"

"HE IS DESCENDED
FROM THE FIRST
MURDERER."

"HE BELIEVES HIS
SOLE RIGHT IS TO
PREY ON WHOMEVER
HE CHOOSES."

"WHERE I PUNISH
SOCIETY'S **WORST**, HE
PUNISHES ITS **BEST**."

"AFTER DECADES, HE ONLY
NEEDS **ONE MORE** GOOD
HEART TO OPEN THE DOOR. YOU
CAN'T STOP HIM **ALONE**."

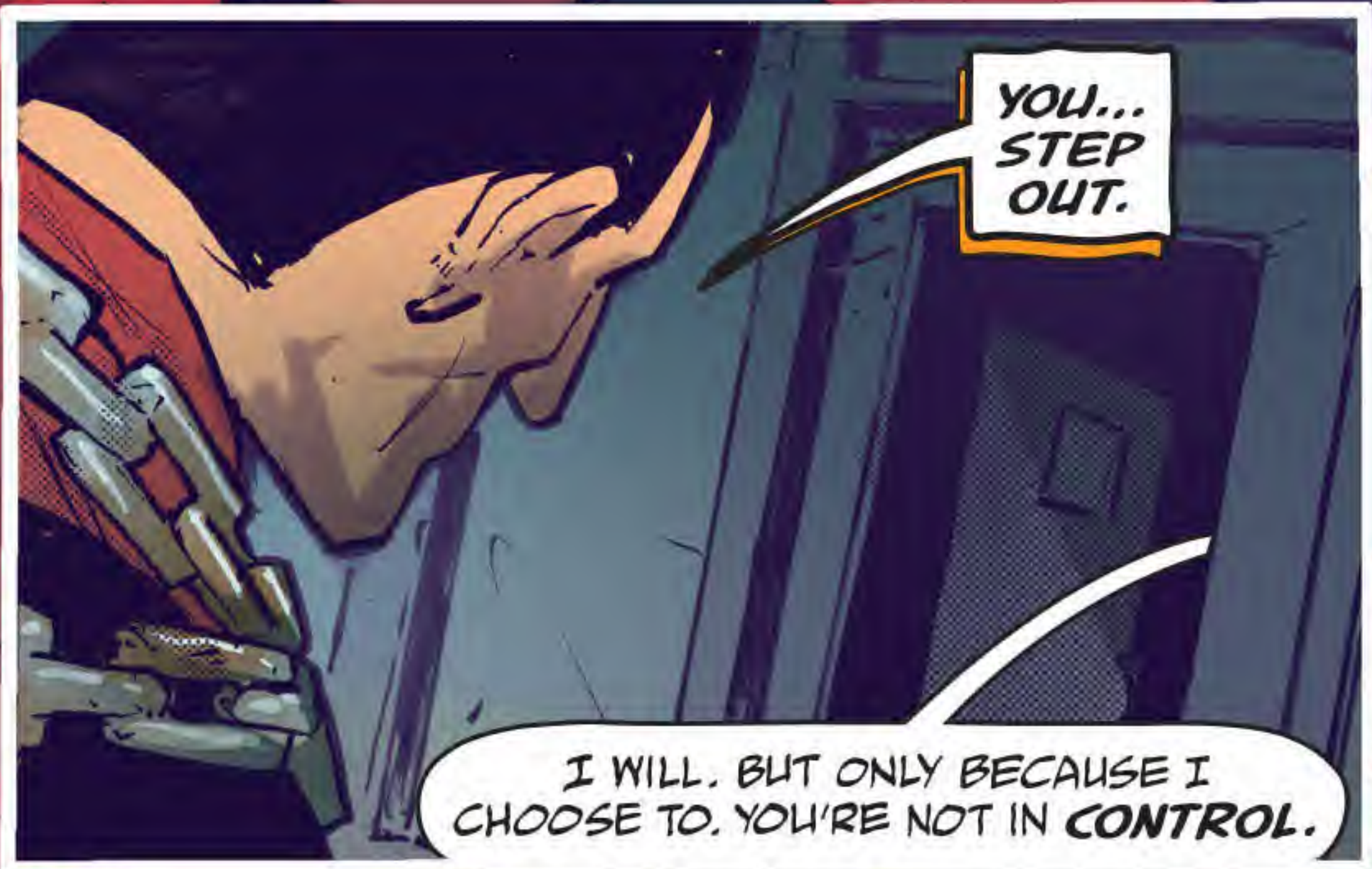
"YOU DON'T GET A **PASS**
JUST BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T
KILL LAMONT CRANSTON."

"HIS EACH AND EVERY RITUAL MURDER
BRINGS THE STAG CLOSER TO SHAMBA-LA--
THE SAME POWER THAT CREATED **ME**."

"I'LL STOP THE STAG.
THEN I'LL DEAL WITH YOU."

"WE'RE AT THE BOTTOM
OF GOTHAM HARBOR.
MILLIONS OF
GALLONS OF WATER
HANG OVER YOUR HEAD."

"BEHAVE
WHILE I'M
GONE."



YOU...
STEP
OUT.

I WILL. BUT ONLY BECAUSE I
CHOOSE TO. YOU'RE NOT IN **CONTROL**.

I HAVE BEEN IN
CONTROL SINCE
BEFORE YOU WERE
BORN, ALFRED
PENNYWORTH.

ALL WELL AND GOOD.
BUT ONLY TWO PEOPLE COULD
ESCAPE THOSE CHAINS.

ONE IS
A **GOD**. THE
OTHER IS
BATMAN.

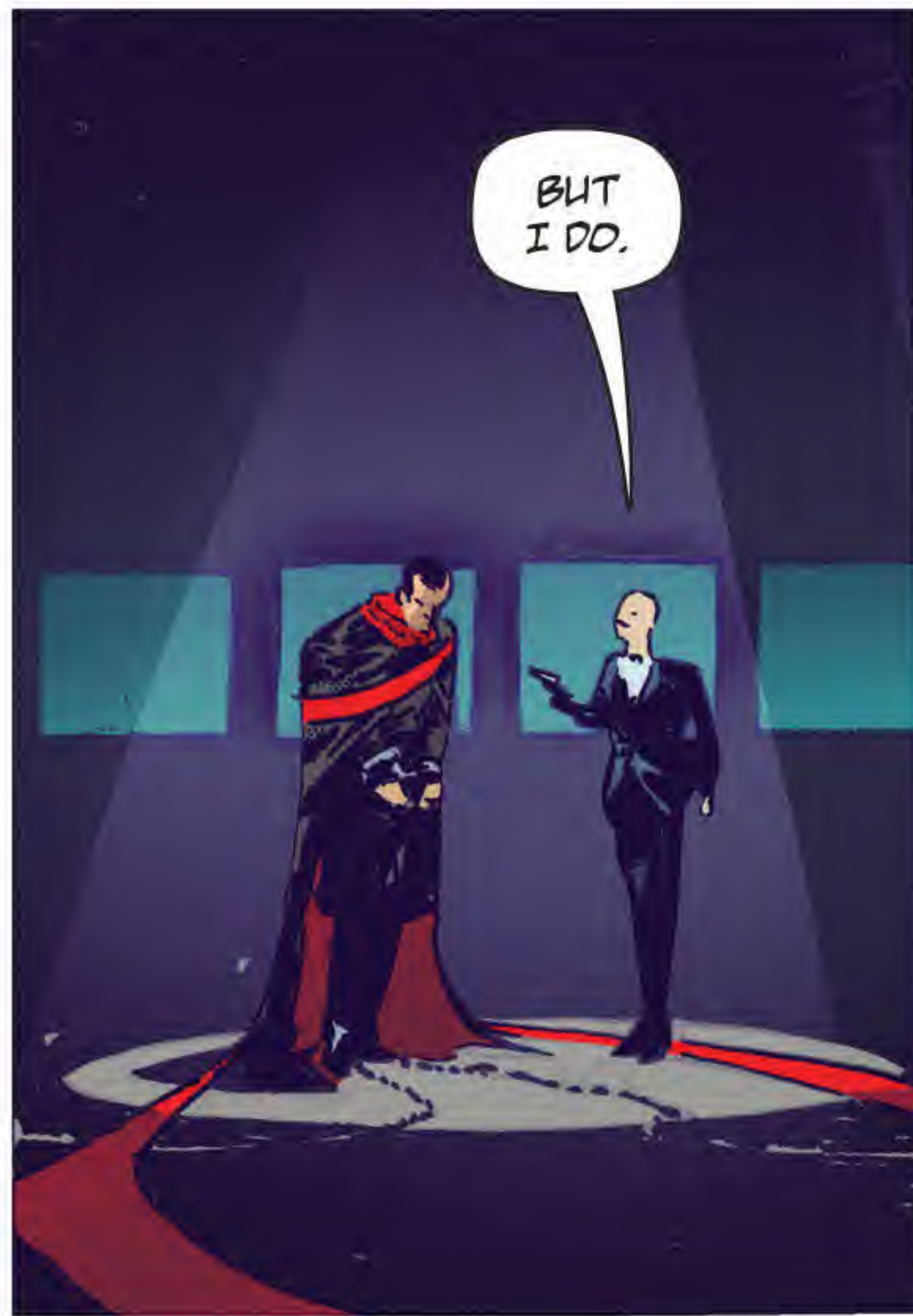


AND **WHO** DO YOU
THINK **TAUGHT** HIM?



YES, WELL YOU **WOULD** SAY THAT. MASTER BRUCE MAY NOT UNDERSTAND YOU...

HE MAY NOT ACCEPT THAT THERE ARE DARK THINGS IN THIS WORLD THAT SIMPLY CANNOT BE EXPLAINED.



BUT I DO.



"THIS WASN'T ALWAYS MY UNIFORM.

"I WAS WORKING FOR M16. LONG BEFORE I MET THOMAS WAYNE.

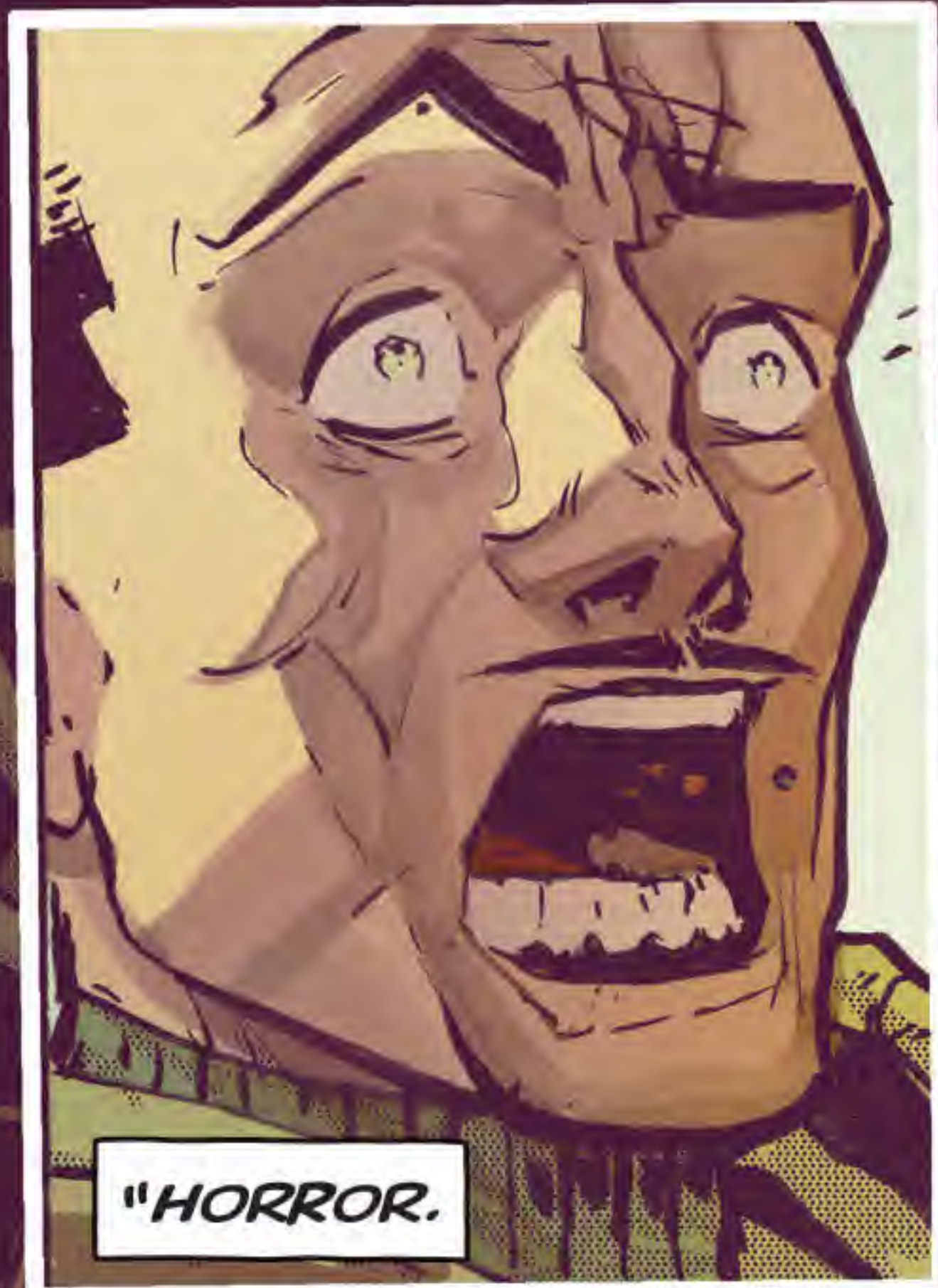


"WE TRACKED A FUGITIVE TO CANADA'S NORTHWEST. HE WAS HOLED UP TIGHT. BUT WE FOUND HIM.



"FOUND HIM **DEAD** BY HIS OWN HAND.

"BUT SOMETHING WAS THERE WITH US IN THAT PLACE. **SOMETHING** IN THE WALLS.



"HORROR.

"TRUE EVIL--POTENT, PRIMAL, UNENDING. SCAR TISSUE ON A BETTER WORLD.



"MY MEN TURNED ON EACH OTHER. TORE AT THEMSELVES. I CLOSED MY EYES TO NOT BE STRUCK MAD.



"AND I **RAN**.

"IN EVERY BATTLE SINCE, IN MY **YEARS** AT MASTER BRUCE'S SIDE, I HAVE NEVER SEEN PITCH AS DARK AS IN THAT PLACE...

"UNTIL I LOOKED INTO **YOUR EYES** TODAY."



I NEVER TOLD BATMAN. I'VE NEVER SPOKEN OF IT TO **ANYONE**.

SO NOW, YOU'RE GOING TO SPEAK TO **ME**.

EAST
END.

I GET IT.
YOUR SHADOW'S
WORKING WITH
BAT-EARS AND YOU
WANT SOMEONE TO
STAB WITH.

BUT
WHY SHOULD
I **TRUST**
YOU?

I AM AN
HONEST
SIGNAL.



THAT'S SOME
SCIENCE
RIGHT THERE--
DIDN'T EXPECT
THAT FROM
SOMEONE SO
PRECAMBRIAN.

I LIKE IT.
MEANS YOU'RE
LIKE ME. EXACTLY
WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE.
TOXIC. DEADLY. AND
YOU DON'T **HIDE** IT.



WHAT
YOU GOT
THERE?



HOLD ON.

I DIDN'T
KNOW THERE'D BE
READING.





...I FIND MYSELF NEWLY STIMULATED.

CAIN? CAN'T PICK YOUR **FAMILY**, I GUESS. A BIT **TRADITIONAL** FOR ME. I PRIDE MYSELF ON **INNOVATION**.

BUT I KNOW AN **APEX PREDATOR** WHEN I SEE ONE.

A LION DOESN'T PASS JUDGEMENT ON A GAZELLE. CANCER DOESN'T PASS JUDGEMENT ON A BRAIN. I'VE BEEN SAYING THIS ALL ALONG.

EVIL DOESN'T EXIST. THERE ARE ONLY **ACTIONS**.

WE GOT TO THE SAME PLACE-- THE **TOP** OF THE FOOD CHAIN--JUST ON DIFFERENT PATHS.

MINE WAS MORE **FUN**.

BUT, HORNY? I THINK WE'RE GOING TO GET ALONG JUST **FINE**.



GOTHAM HARBOR.

YOU ATTACKED MASTER BRUCE IN LAMONT CRANSTON'S APARTMENT.

WHY?

NO ONE COMMANDS THE SHADOW.

SOMEONE DOES. I MIGHT BE OLD, BUT YOU'RE A **STATIONARY TARGET** AND I'VE GOT THE **PISTOL**.

DO YOU?

WHAT?!

IT--IT WAS IN MY HAND!

THE CLOUDED MIND IS **CONFIDENT**, PENNYWORTH.

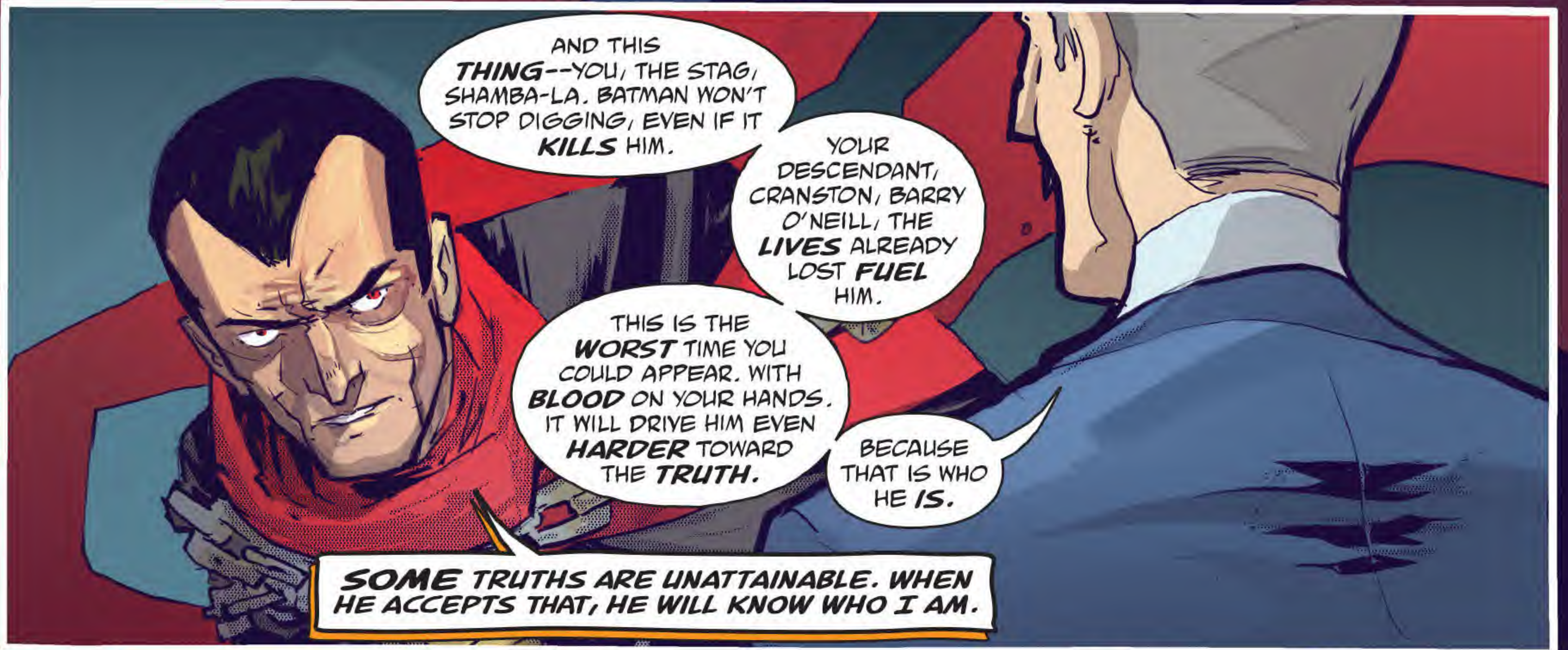
AS FOR MY ATTACK--I HAVE NEVER STOPPED **TRAINING** BRUCE. SOME **LESSONS** CAN ONLY BE LEARNED IN **HINDSIGHT**.

AND CONTEMPLATION OF **THE SHADOW** IS BRUCE WAYNE'S MOST IMPORTANT LESSON.



...I'VE KNOWN BRUCE HIS ENTIRE LIFE. AND **MAYBE...** SO HAVE YOU.

IF YOU **HAVE**, THEN YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T **FORCE** HIM TO DO THINGS.



AND THIS **THING**--YOU, THE STAG, SHAMBA-LA. BATMAN WON'T STOP DIGGING, EVEN IF IT **KILLS** HIM.

YOUR DESCENDANT, CRANSTON, BARRY O'NEILL, THE **LIVES** ALREADY LOST **FUEL** HIM.

THIS IS THE **WORST** TIME YOU COULD APPEAR. WITH **BLOOD** ON YOUR HANDS. IT WILL DRIVE HIM EVEN **HARDER** TOWARD THE **TRUTH**.

BECAUSE THAT IS WHO HE IS.

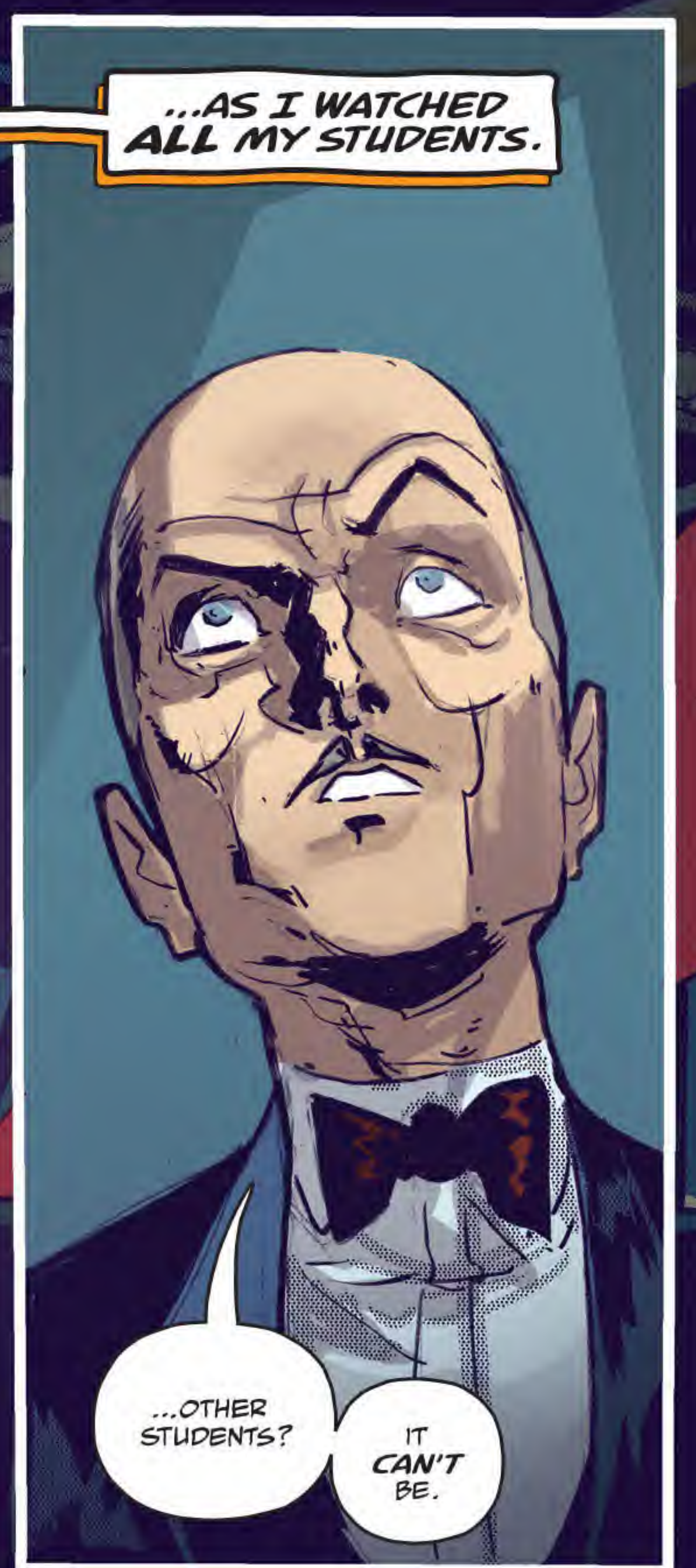
SOME TRUTHS ARE UNATTAINABLE. WHEN HE ACCEPTS THAT, HE WILL KNOW WHO I AM.



BUT THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME I'VE APPEARED.

I HAVE VISITED HIM **MANY** TIMES, IN **MANY** FACES, LEAVING HIS MIND CLOUDED. THIS FACE BUT A GLINT IN THE PERIPHERAL VISION OF HIS MIND'S EYE.

I HAVE **LONG** WATCHED BATMAN'S DEVELOPMENT...



...AS I WATCHED ALL MY STUDENTS.

...OTHER STUDENTS?

IT CAN'T BE.

"CAN'T IT?"

"I HAVE BUILT
AN **ARMY** OVER
THE DECADES..."



"SOLDIERS THAT WOULD
ONE DAY STAND WITH ME
AGAINST AN IMMORTAL
KILLER MY GUNS ALONE
COULD NOT SILENCE."



"YET AS EACH
WAS ABOUT TO
COMPLETE THEIR
TRAINING, THEY
WERE CUT DOWN
BY THE STAG."

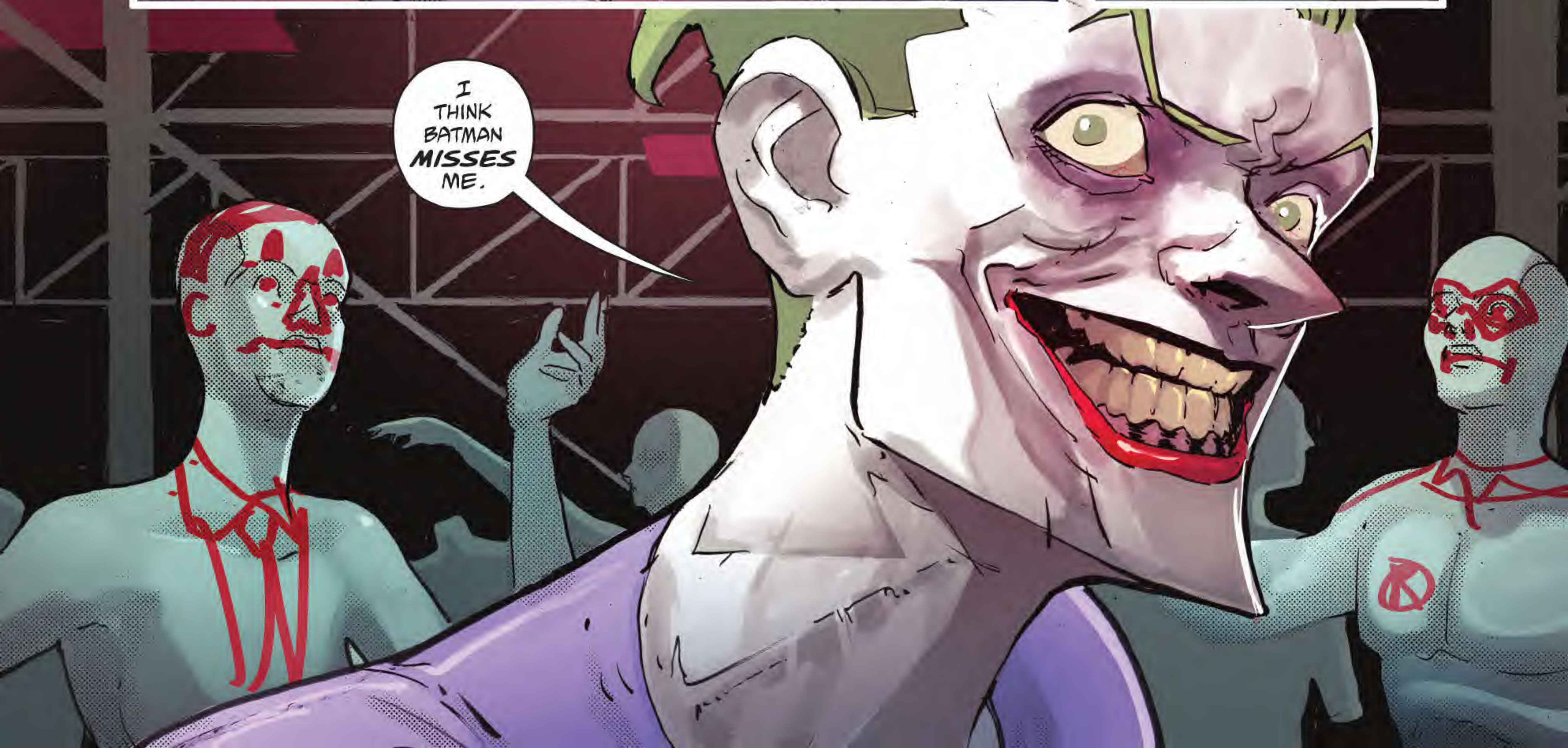
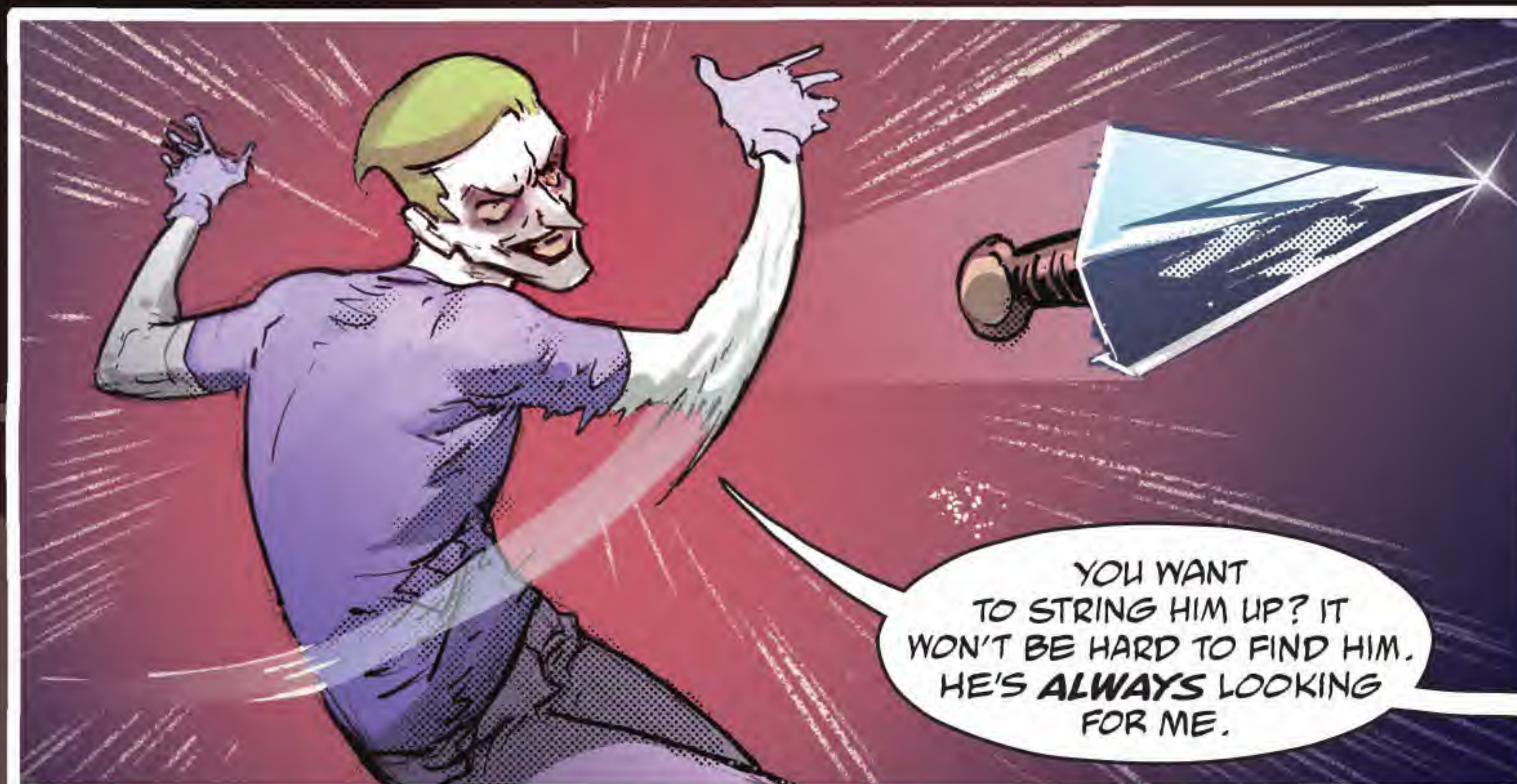
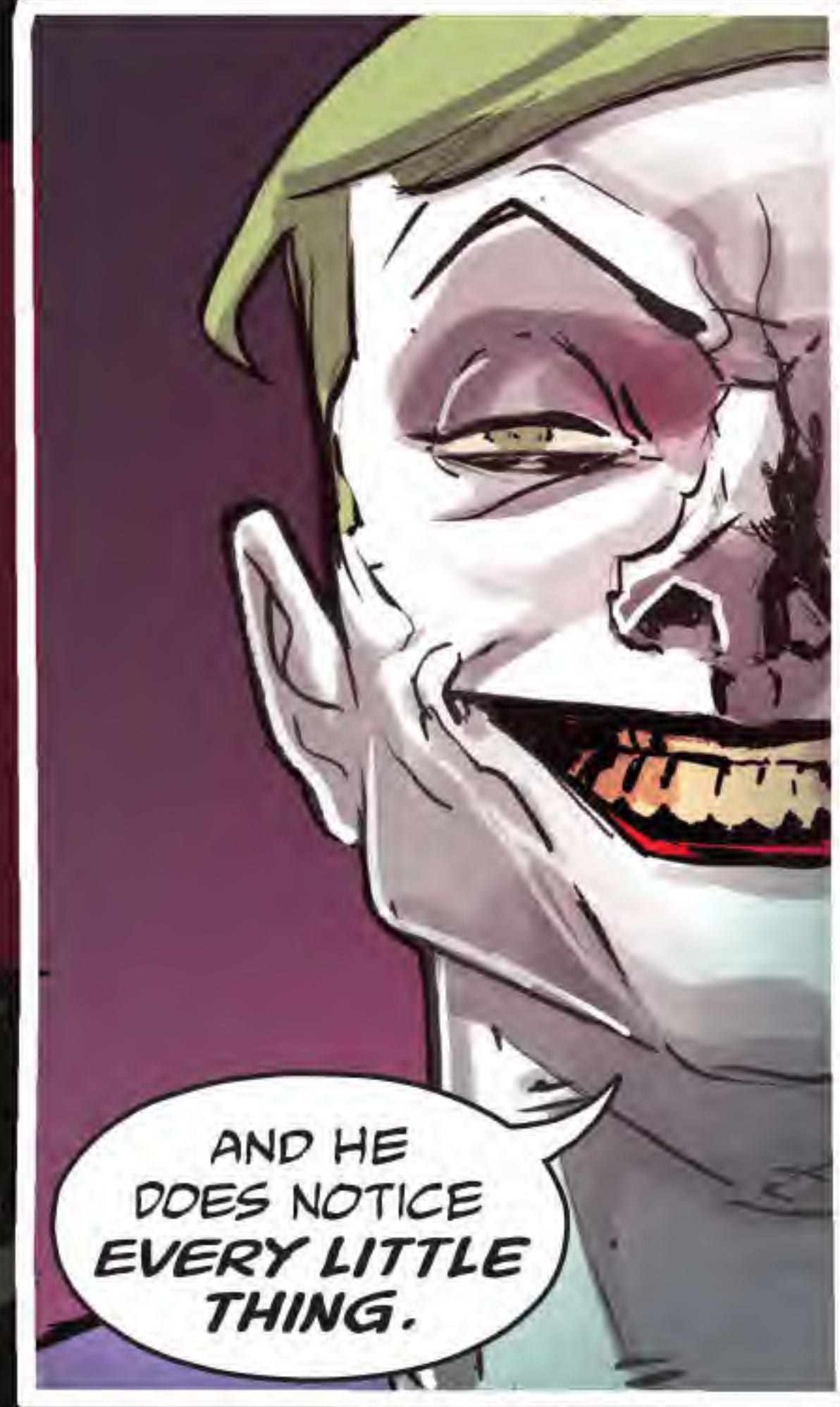


"BATMAN IS
NOT MY **ONLY**
STUDENT, ALFRED
PENNYWORTH."



"BUT HE IS
THE LAST."





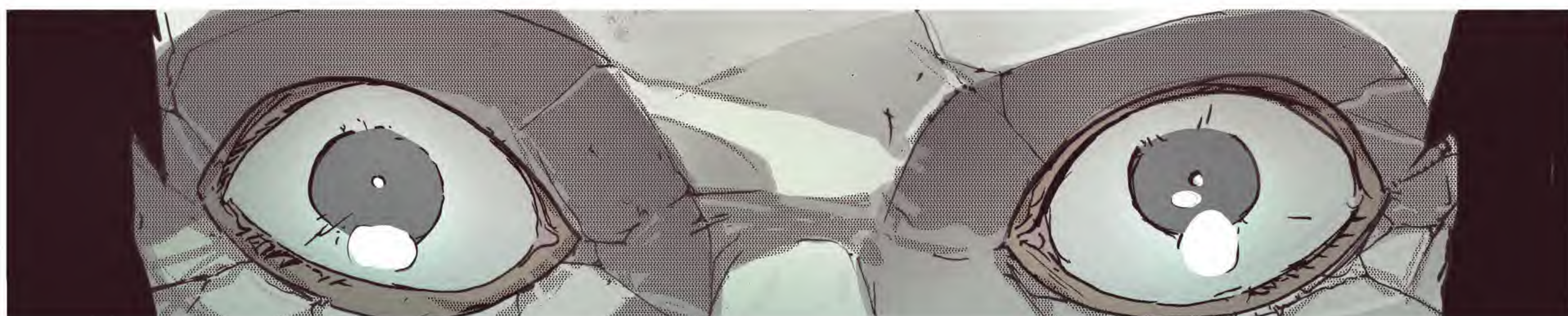
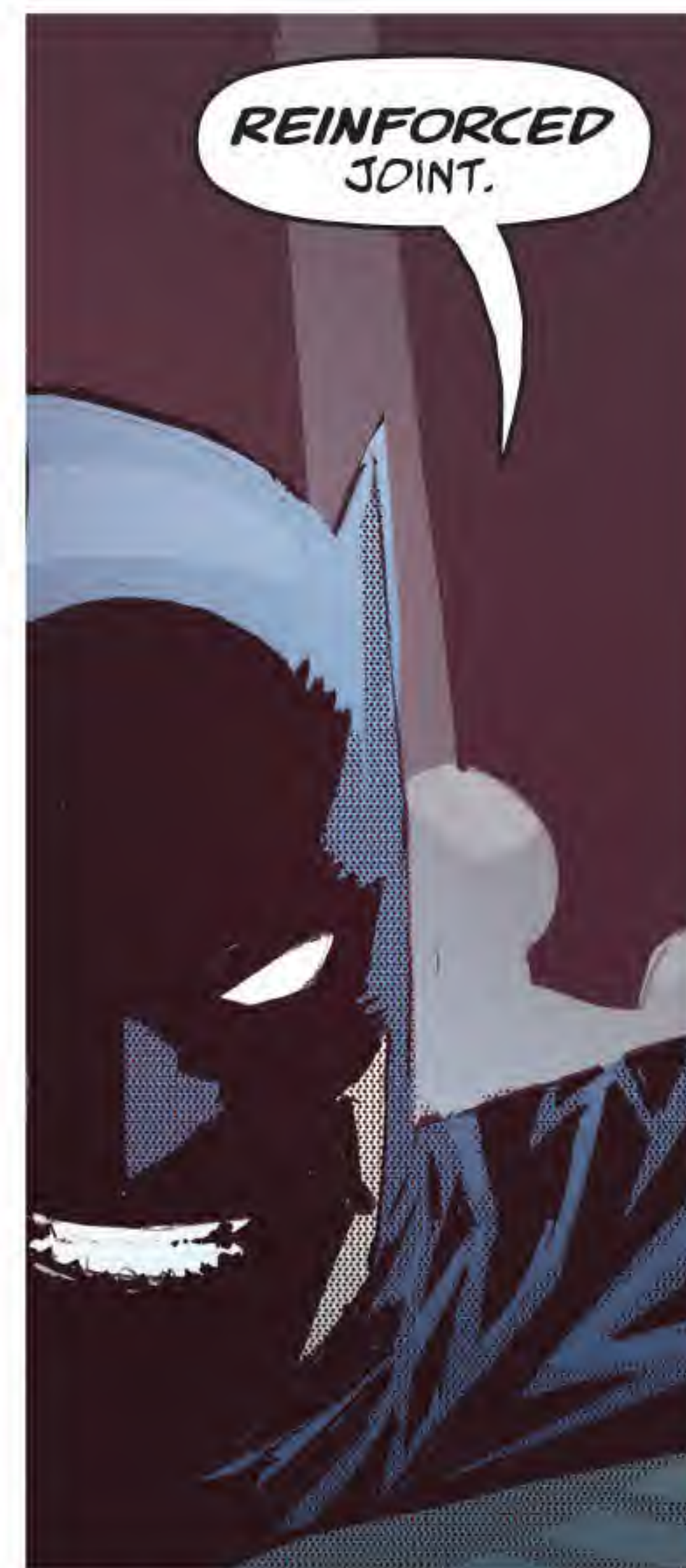


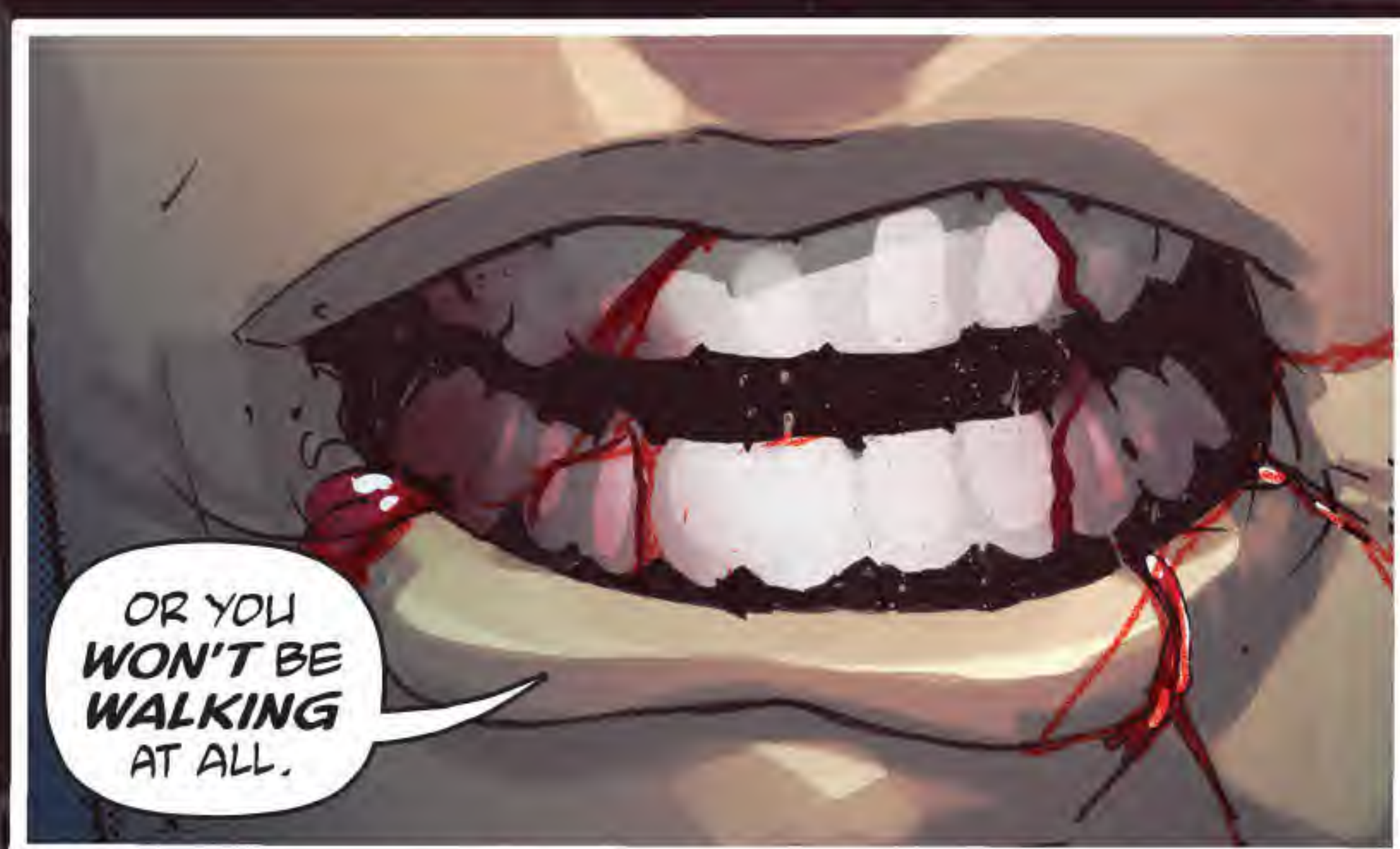
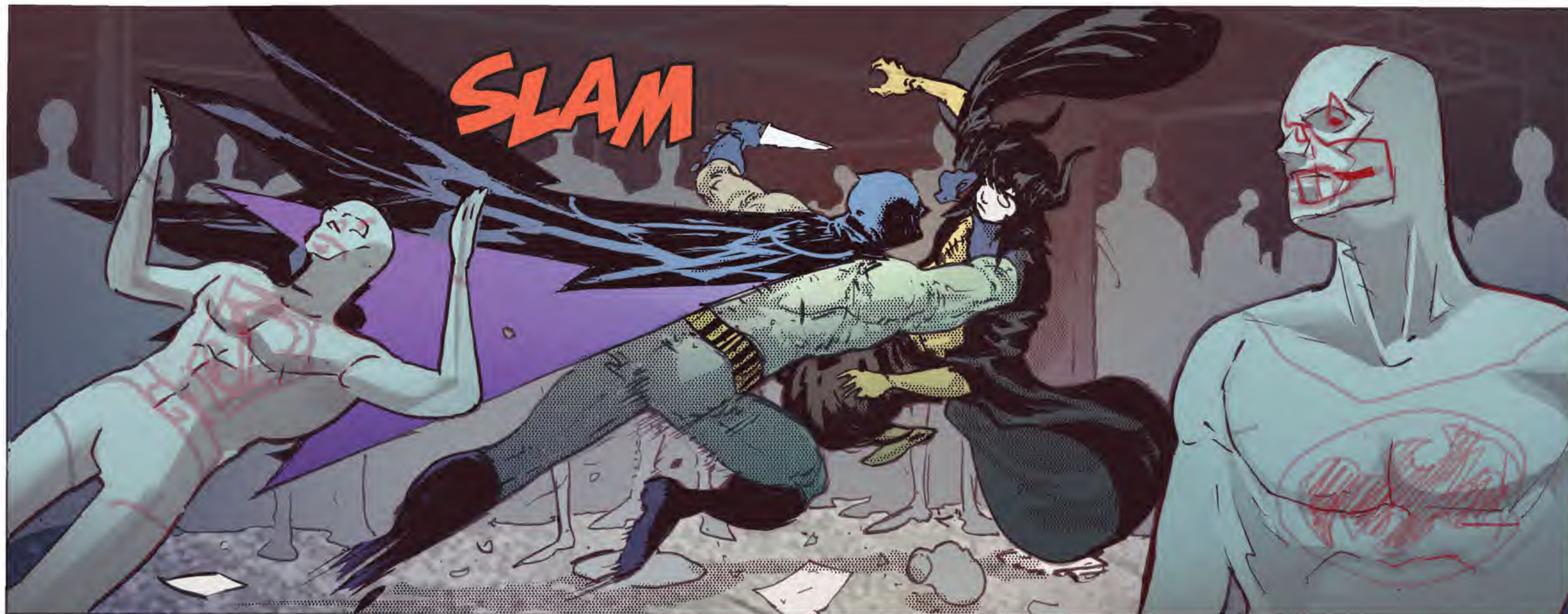
CRASH

I KNOW
I WOULD.











GOTHAM HARBOR.

...STAY WHERE YOU ARE.

NO.

IT IS **TIME** I TOOK MY LEAVE.

WHAT-- YOU CAN'T, YOU CAN'T.

YOU NOW KNOW WHAT YOU MUST. I HAVE BEEN HERE **EXACTLY** AS LONG AS NEEDED.

THERE ARE ONLY SO MANY **GOOD** PEOPLE IN GOTHAM. YOU ARE NOT ONE OF THEM. NEITHER AM I.

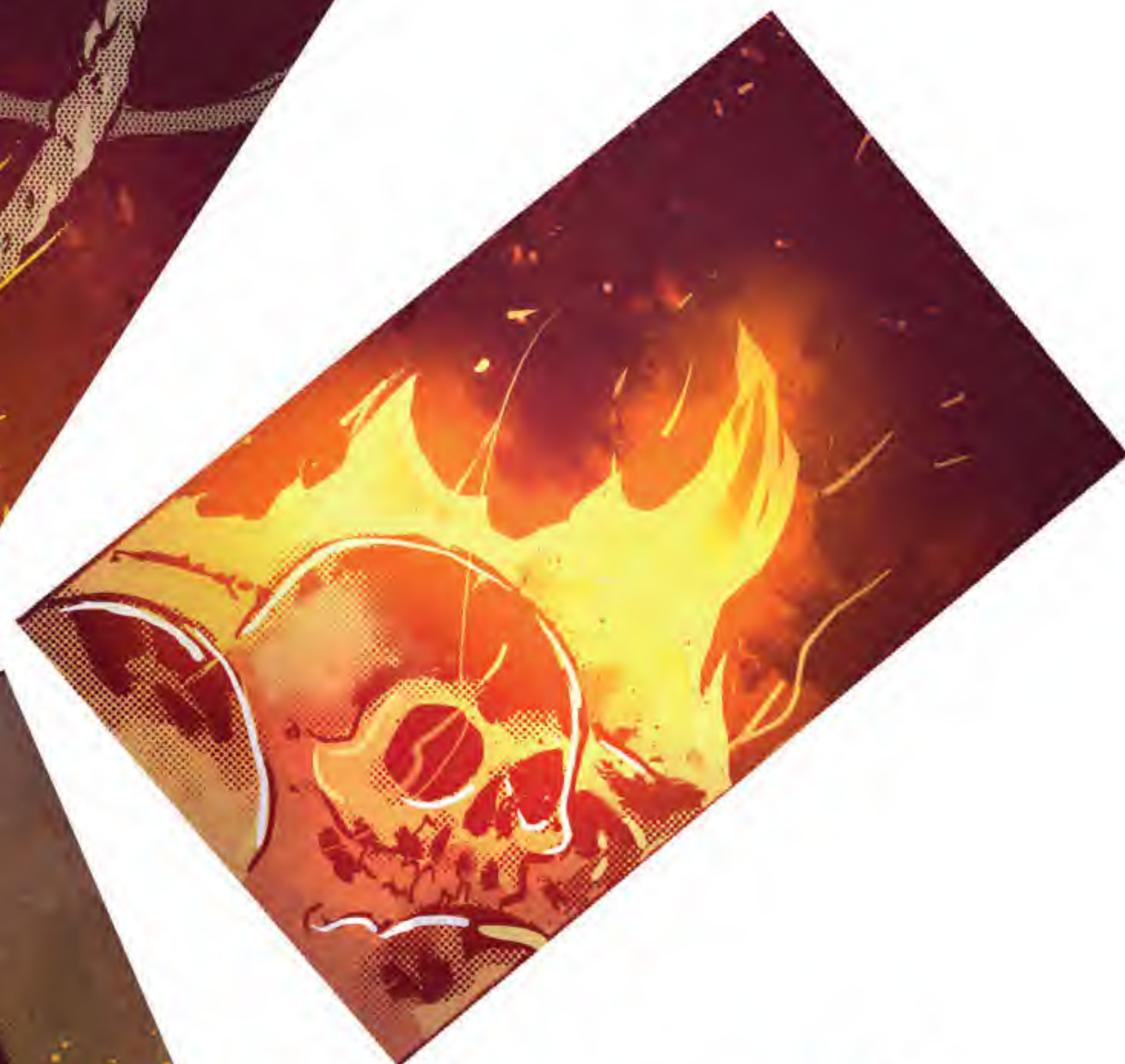
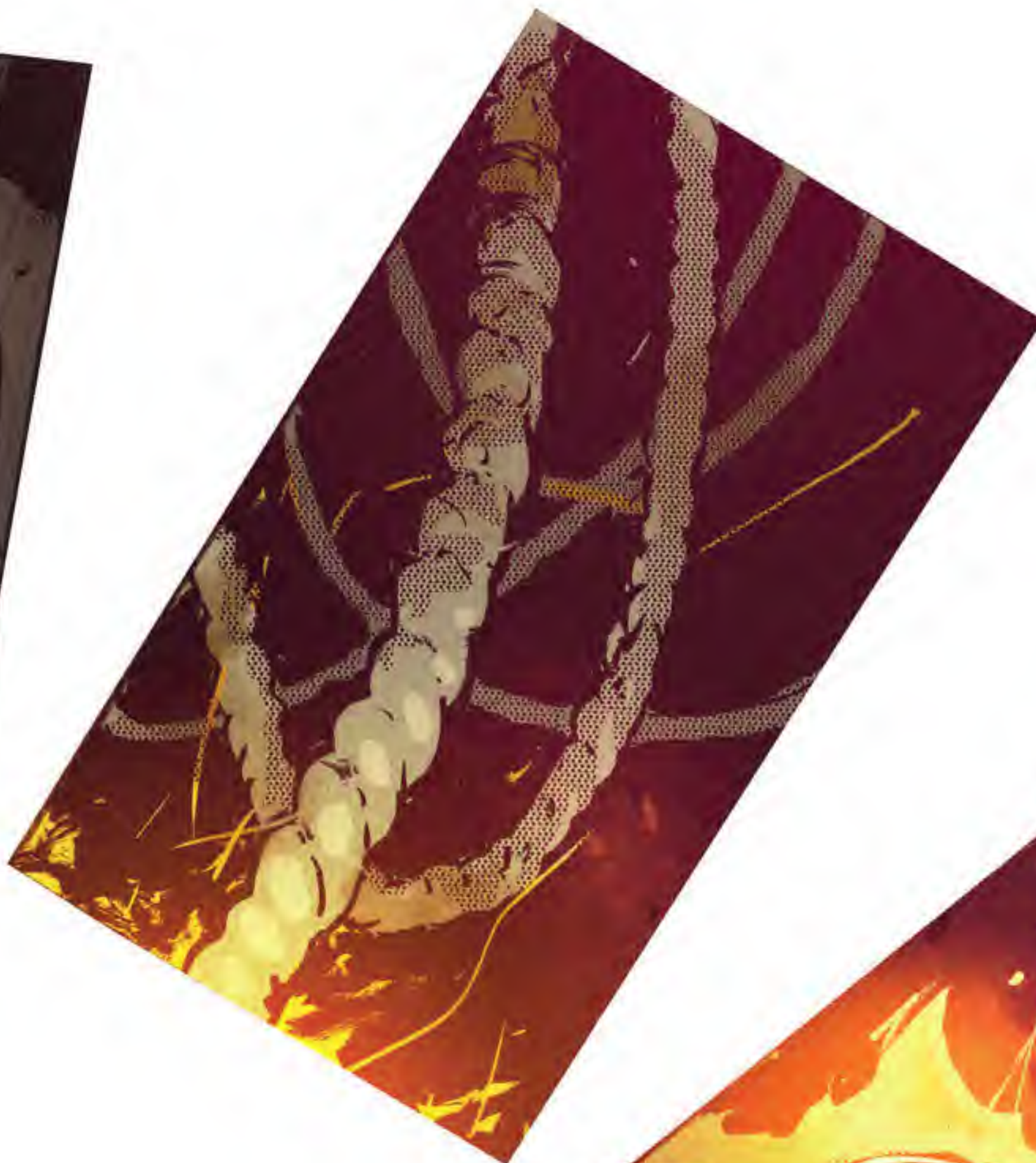
I TOLD BRUCE FROM THE START. IT IS WHY I GUIDED HIM THROUGH **EVERY** FACE THAT MADE HIM WHO HE IS.

IT WASN'T **JUST** TO DEFEAT THE STAG.

IT WAS TO **PROTECT** HIM. BRUCE WAS IN DANGER FROM THE MOMENT HE CHOSE TO BECOME A BAT. TO GIVE UP A HUMAN LIFE TO PROTECT OTHERS.

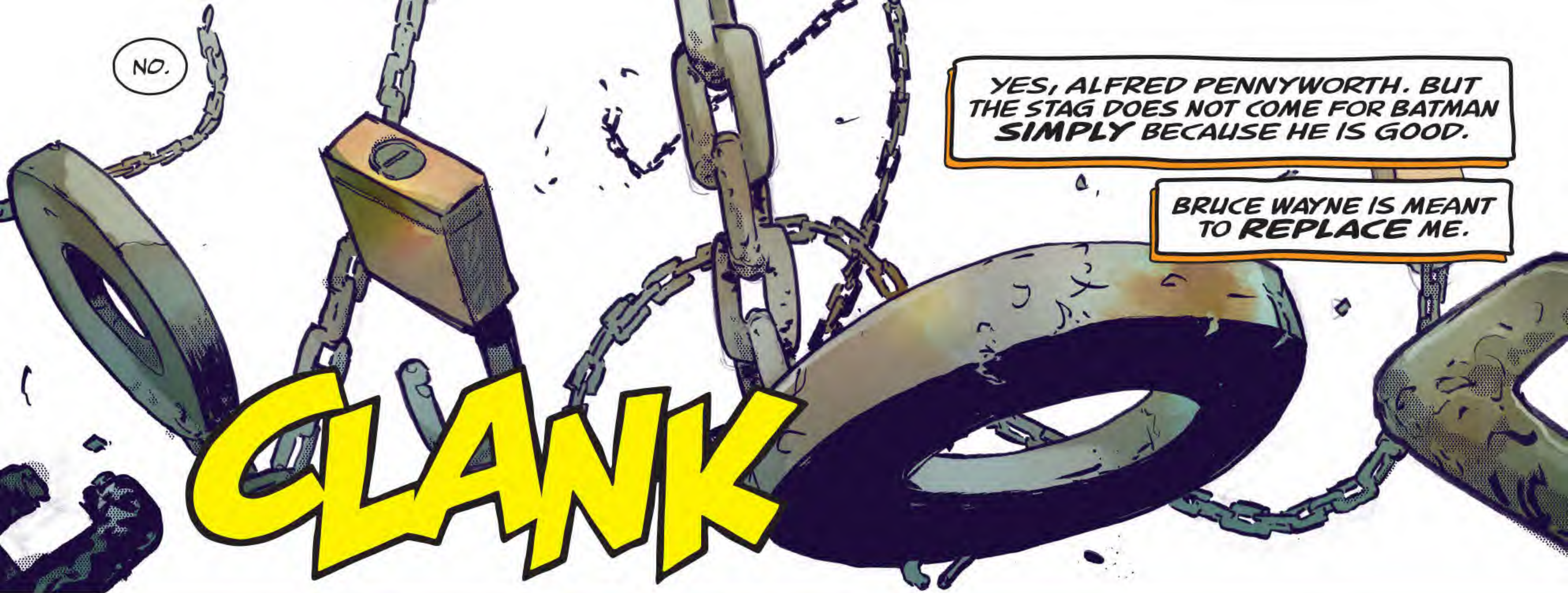
TO BE ONE OF GOTHAM'S **BEST**.

"BRUCE WAYNE
IS THE STAG'S
FINAL VICTIM."





YOU'LL
LOVE WHAT
COMES
NEXT.



NO.

YES, ALFRED PENNYWORTH. BUT THE STAG DOES NOT COME FOR BATMAN SIMPLY BECAUSE HE IS GOOD.

BRUCE WAYNE IS MEANT TO REPLACE ME.

CLANK



HE COMES BECAUSE **BATMAN** IS DESTINED TO BECOME THE **NEXT SHADOW**.

NEXT: BLOOD IN GOTHAM'S TOMB





GOTHAM'S TOMB.

FAR BENEATH
GOTHAM CITY.

ME? I
NEVER LIKED
HISTORY.

I
SAY LIVE IN
THE MOMENT.
ACT.

BUT MY
CERVINE FRIEND
IS A BIG FAN. HE'S A
REGULAR **HISTORIAN**
OF THE BRUTAL
ARTS.

OLD-
FOLKS' STUFF.
HE FOUND
THIS PLACE.
KNOW WHAT
IT IS?

BACK BEFORE
THIS PLACE WAS A
PLACE, A **WARLOCK**
WAS INTERNED RIGHT
HERE. THE **CITY** GREW UP
AROUND THE TOMB,
JUICED UP ON ITS
SUFFERING.

THIS IS
THE BURIAL SITE
OF DR. GOTHAM.
THIS IS WHERE EVIL
STARTED IN
THIS TOWN...





SMACK CRASH



I KNOW.

A comic book illustration of a man in a red shirt and black hat, holding two pistols, with the sound effect 'BOAM' repeated twice. The man is wearing a black hat and a red shirt with a black vest. He is holding two pistols, one in each hand, and firing them. The background is a bright yellow and orange, suggesting a fiery or explosive environment. The sound effect 'BOAM' is written in large, bold, black letters with a white outline, appearing twice on either side of the man. The style is reminiscent of classic comic book art, with bold lines and a limited color palette.

A comic book illustration of a man in a red shirt and black hat, holding two pistols, with the sound effect 'BOAM' repeated twice. The man is wearing a black hat and a red shirt with a black vest. He is holding two pistols, one in each hand, and firing them. The background is a bright yellow and orange, suggesting a fiery or explosive environment. The sound effect 'BOAM' is written in large, bold, black letters with a white outline, appearing twice on either side of the man. The style is reminiscent of classic comic book art, with bold lines and a limited color palette.



SHADOW.
YOU'RE **HERE**.
I NEED TO TALK TO
ALFRED ABOUT
HIS **KNOTS**.

STAY BEHIND
ME, FOOL. IT'S
YOUR HEART
THE STAG WANTS.

I DON'T
HIDE BEHIND
KILLERS.

THE WEED OF CRIME
MUST BE **PLUCKED**,
BATMAN. **YOUR**
GARDEN GROWS WILD.

I WOULD HAVE THESE CREATURES **DEAD**. WE'D BE FACING TWO INSTEAD OF TWENTY IF NOT FOR YOUR CHILDISH **RULES**.

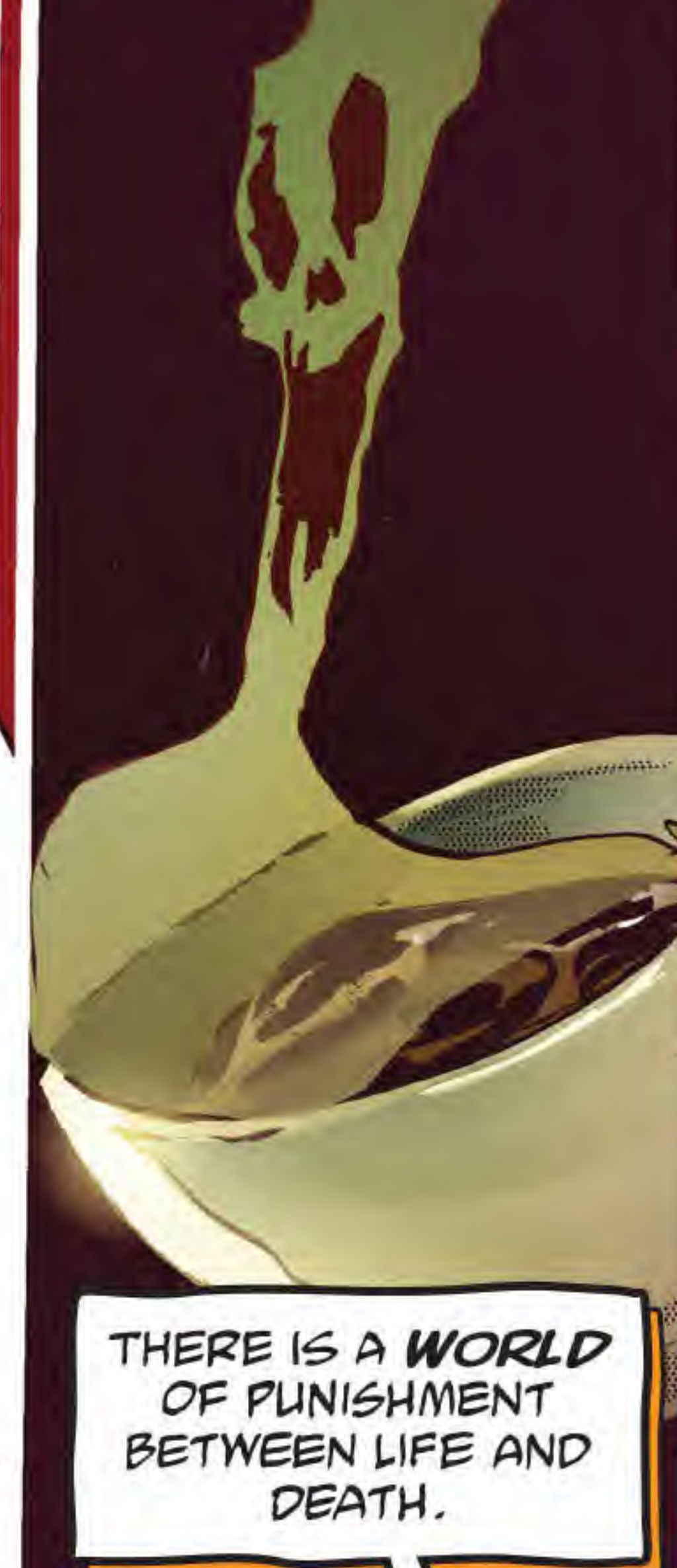
WHAT, YOU'RE
NOT UP FOR A
CHALLENGE?



THEY **ALL**
GO DOWN,
SHADOW.



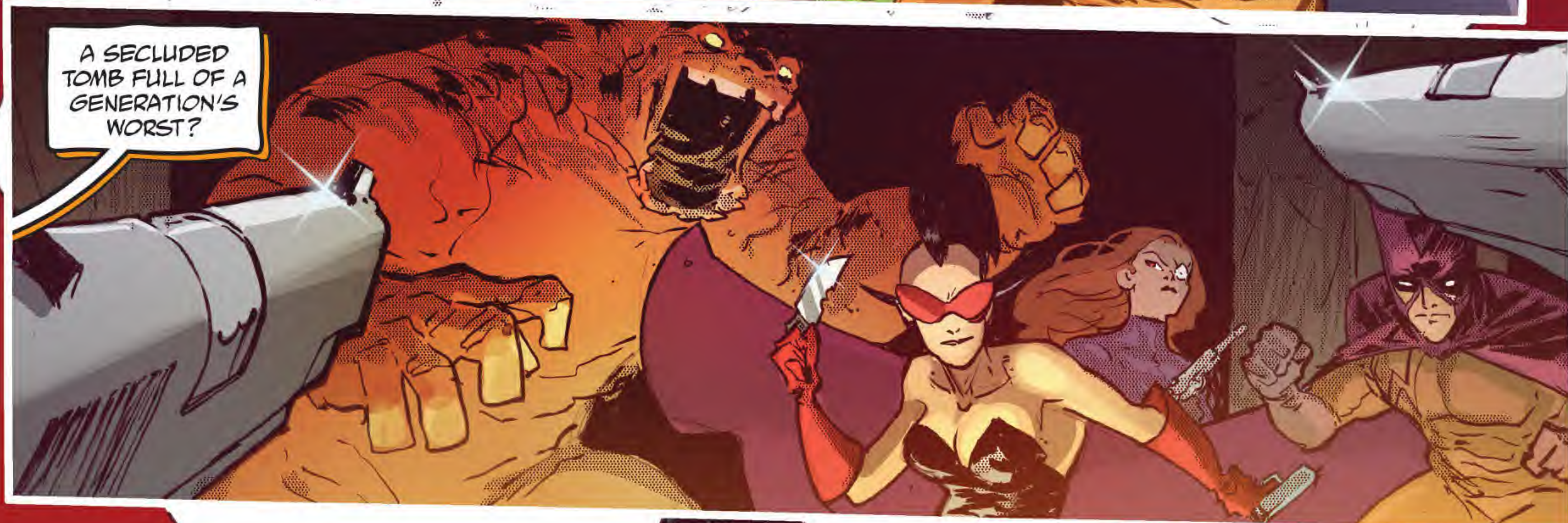
BUT THEY
ALL GET BACK UP,
YOU HEAR ME?



THERE IS A **WORLD**
OF PUNISHMENT
BETWEEN LIFE AND
DEATH.



YOU SOUND
EXCITED
ABOUT
IT.



A SECLUDED
TOMB FULL OF A
GENERATION'S
WORST?

YOU SAY I
WASN'T YOUR
TEACHER,
BATMAN...





BADAM
BADAM
BADAM

YET YOU
BRING
ME SUCH
GIFTS.

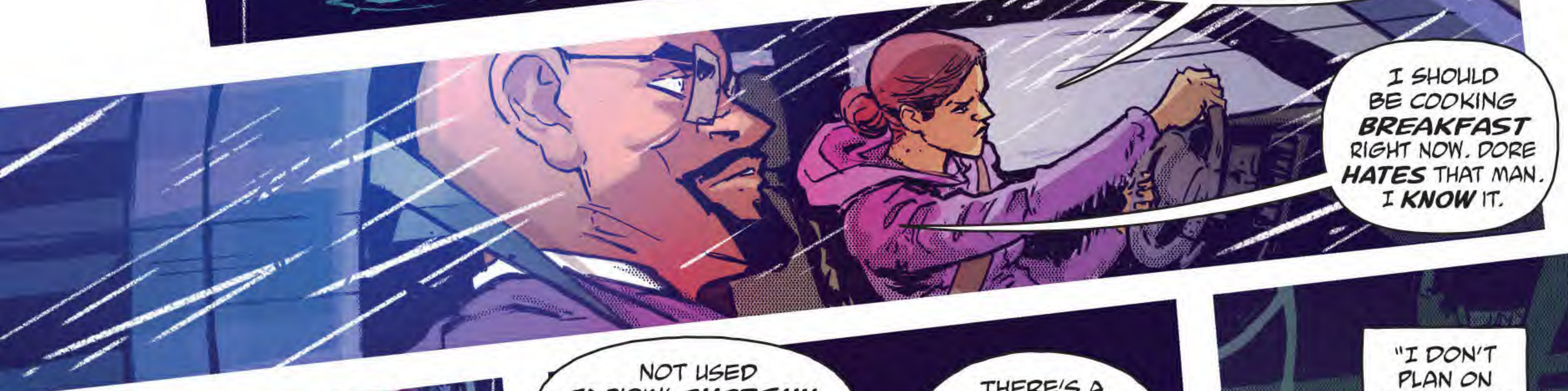


SHIFT'S
OVER,
MONTAYA.
WHAT IS
THIS?



ANONYMOUS TIP, CRIS.
THE COMMISSIONER CALLED IN
OVERTIME FOR EVERYONE.

I SHOULD
BE COOKING
BREAKFAST
RIGHT NOW. DORE
HATES THAT MAN.
I KNOW IT.



NOT USED
TA RIDIN' **SHOTGUN**,
COMMISH, BUT YA DIDN'T
LOOK LIKE YOU WERE UP
FER **ARGUIN'**.

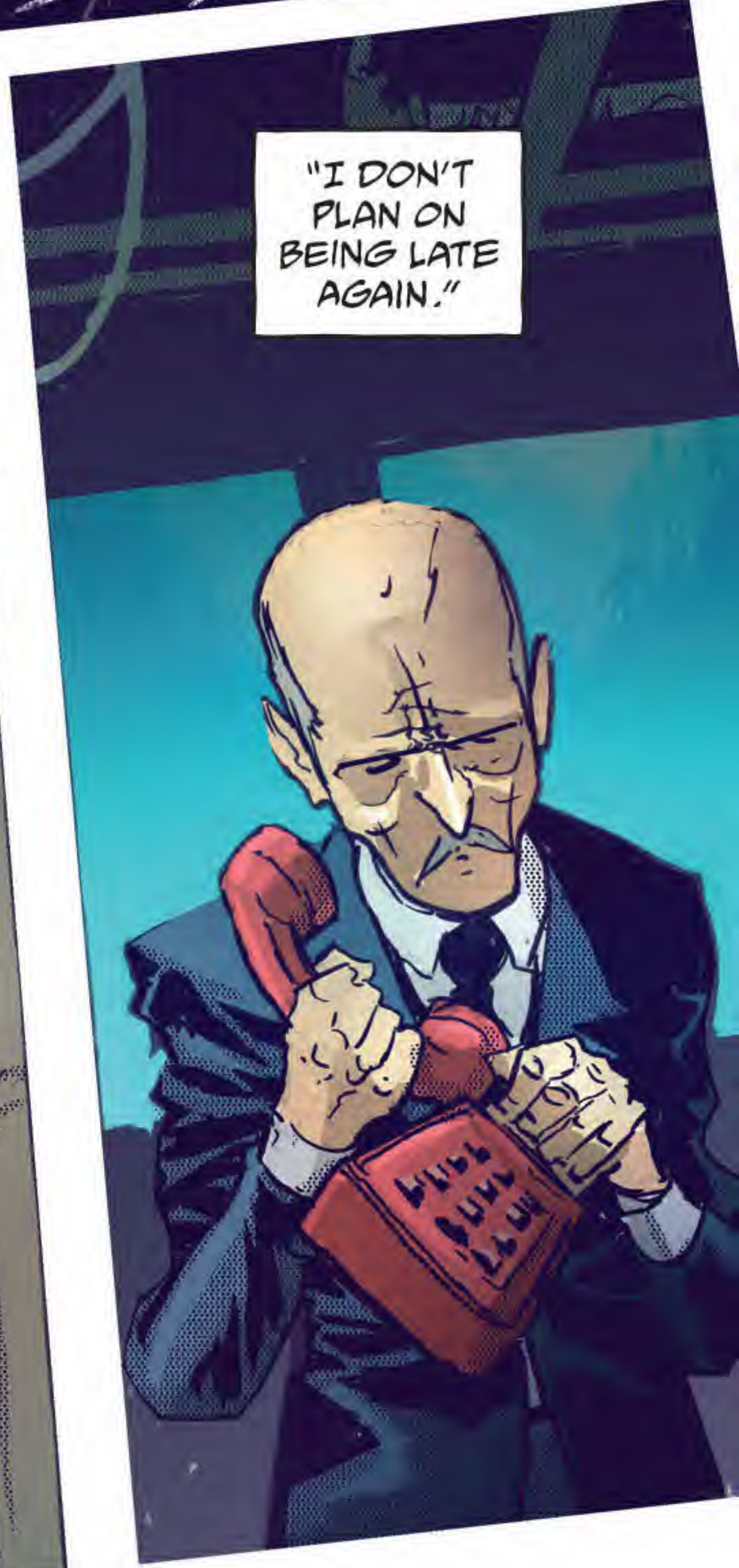
WHAT'RE
WE GETTIN'
INTO
HERE?

THERE'S A
NUMBER ON MY
PHONE, HARVEY. I
DON'T KNOW HOW IT
GOT THERE, AND I
CAN'T CALL OUT
TO IT.

THE **LAST**
TIME IT RANG, WE
WERE TOO LATE. A
MADMAN BROKE
BATMAN'S BACK.

TEN MINUTES
AGO, IT RANG
FOR THE
SECOND TIME IN
HISTORY. AND
TRUST ME...

"I DON'T
PLAN ON
BEING LATE
AGAIN."



GOTHAM'S
TOMB.

THIS IS A
DISTRACTION,
SHADOW.

DO NOT
LOSE JOKER
AND THE
STAG.

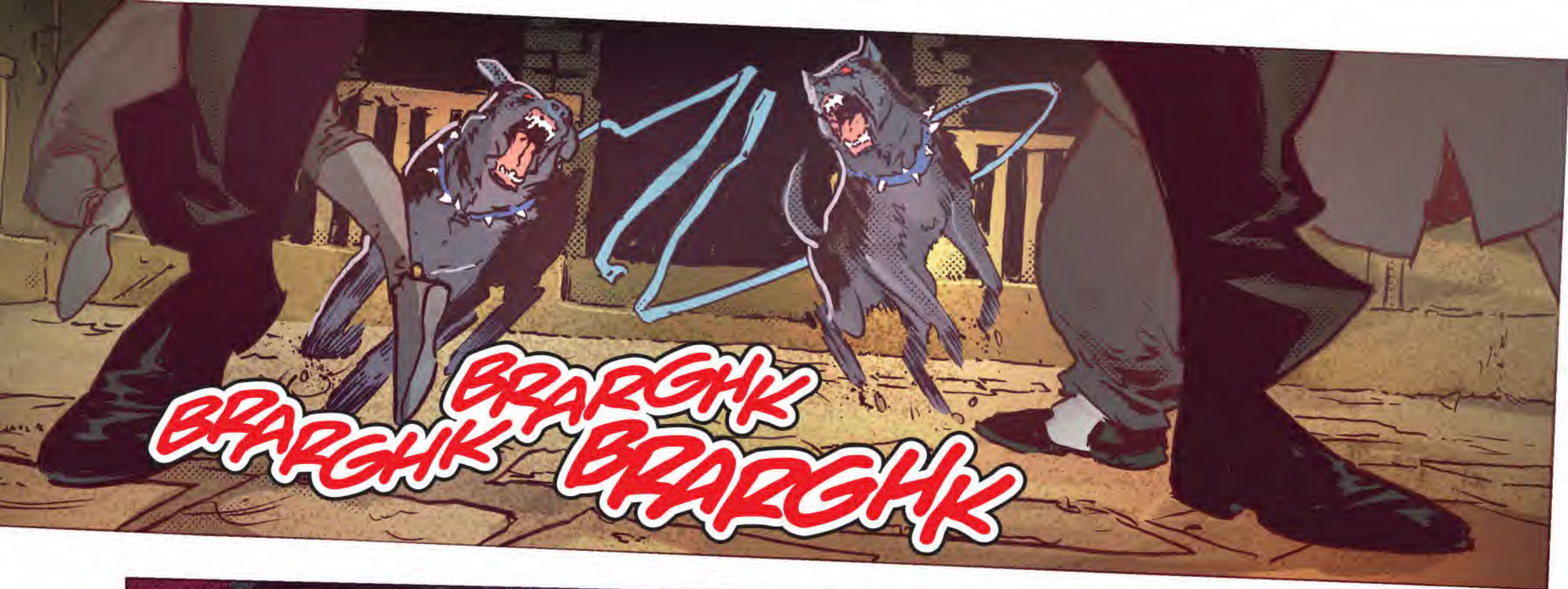
KAI. THE ARMLESS MASTER'S
DISGRACED STUDENT. YOU PROFESS
TO BE "A TRUE **HOUND OF HELL.**"

TONIGHT, I SEND YOU THERE.

HGNK--THAT--
THAT...SO? YOU TALK...
ABOUT THE ARMLESS MASTER
LIKE YOU KNEW HIM...BUT YOU
FORGOT...ONE OF HIS KEY
PRINCIPLES...

MISDIRECTION.

YOU SAID IT--SEE
YOU IN HELL.



GOTHAM
TOBACCONIST'S
CLUB.

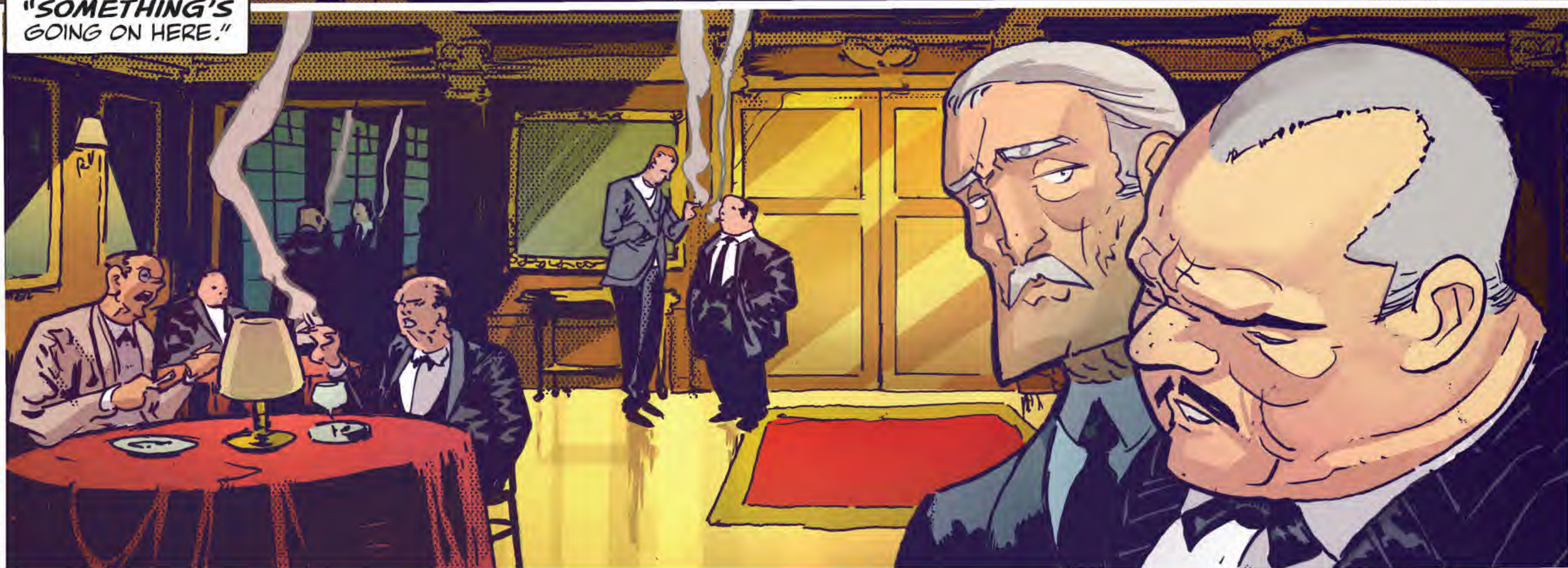


TELL YA **WHAT**, COMMISH. IF WE'RE HERE TA
BUST A COUPL'A CASES A CORTO ROYALES,
I'LL LEAD THE RAID MYSELF.

THAT NUMBER DOESN'T RING
FOR **CIGARS**, HARV. KEEP
TIGHT AND FORM UP.



"SOMETHING'S
GOING ON HERE."



KRASHOOMSKREEEEEEEE



MOTHER
OF--**RUN!** GET
THORNE OUT OF
HERE!

BELOW.



SHADOW!
WE NEED
TO--



NOT
FORGET
YOUR
FAVORITE,
THAT'S
WHAT!



GOTTA SAY, BATS--I ALWAYS
LIKED YOUR HEART **BEATING**.
NO NEED TO END THE **FUN**. BUT IF
THAT'S WHERE THE SQUINCHY KEY
TO SHAMBA-LA IS...WELL? TIME
TO GO DIGGING.

YOU **REALLY**
THINK THE STAG WILL
TAKE YOU TO--

THERE'S A
DELICATE RELATION-
SHIP BETWEEN KILLERS.
YOU WOULDN'T
UNDERSTAND.

NO. BUT
I WOULD.



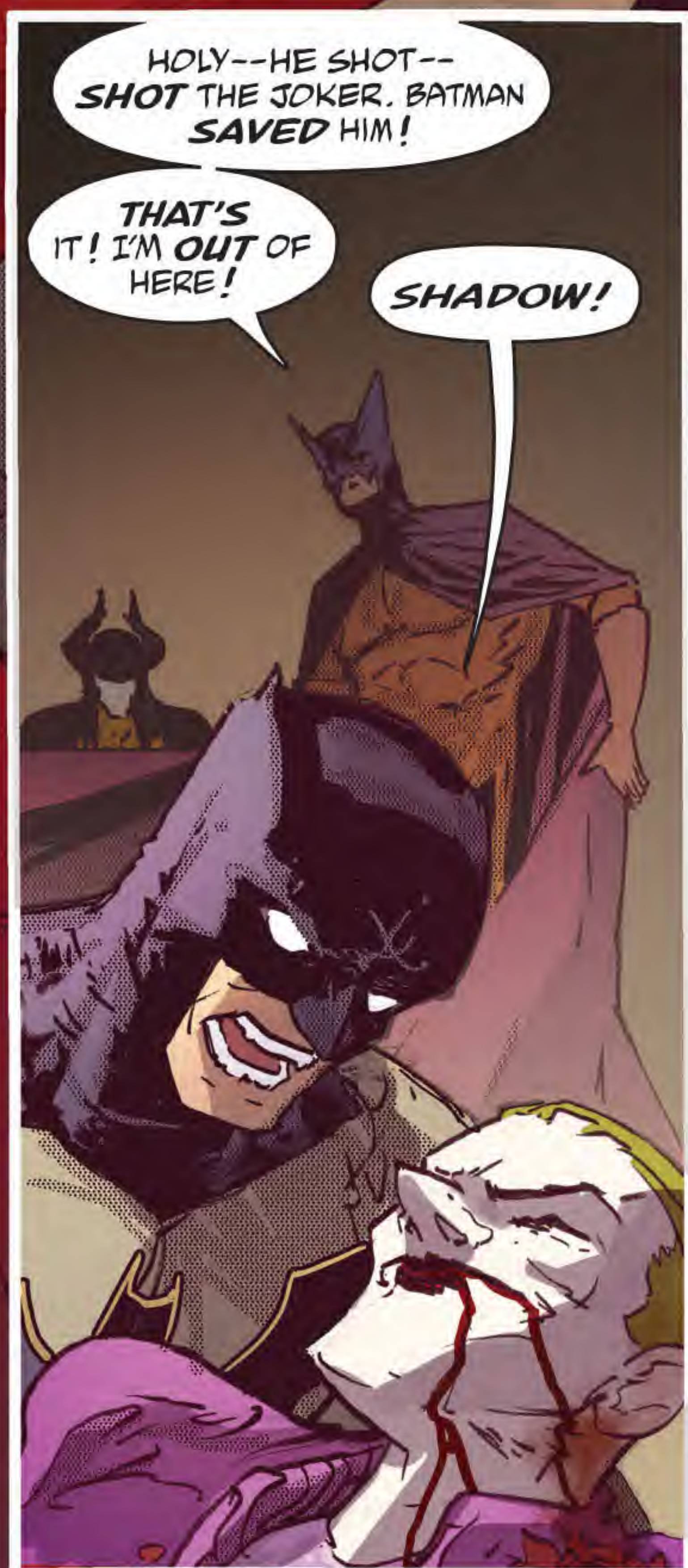
WAIT!





NO!

BAM
BAM



HOLY--HE SHOT--
SHOT THE JOKER. BATMAN
SAVED HIM!

THAT'S
IT! I'M OUT OF
HERE!

SHADOW!



HRRK--HRRK--
YOU DO CARE.

SHUT UP.

NOT...MY
PLAN, BUT...



...AT LEAST
THE WORLD'LL
LOSE BOTH
OF US.

WHAT?!



STGH-SHLURK

I AM AN
HONEST
SIGNAL.

...YOU'RE...
YOU'RE
NOTHING,
STAG.

YOUR
WHOLE LIFE...
BUILT UP TO...
KILLING BATMAN?

BUT THIS...
DOESN'T
END WITH
ME...





GET AWAY FROM HIM!

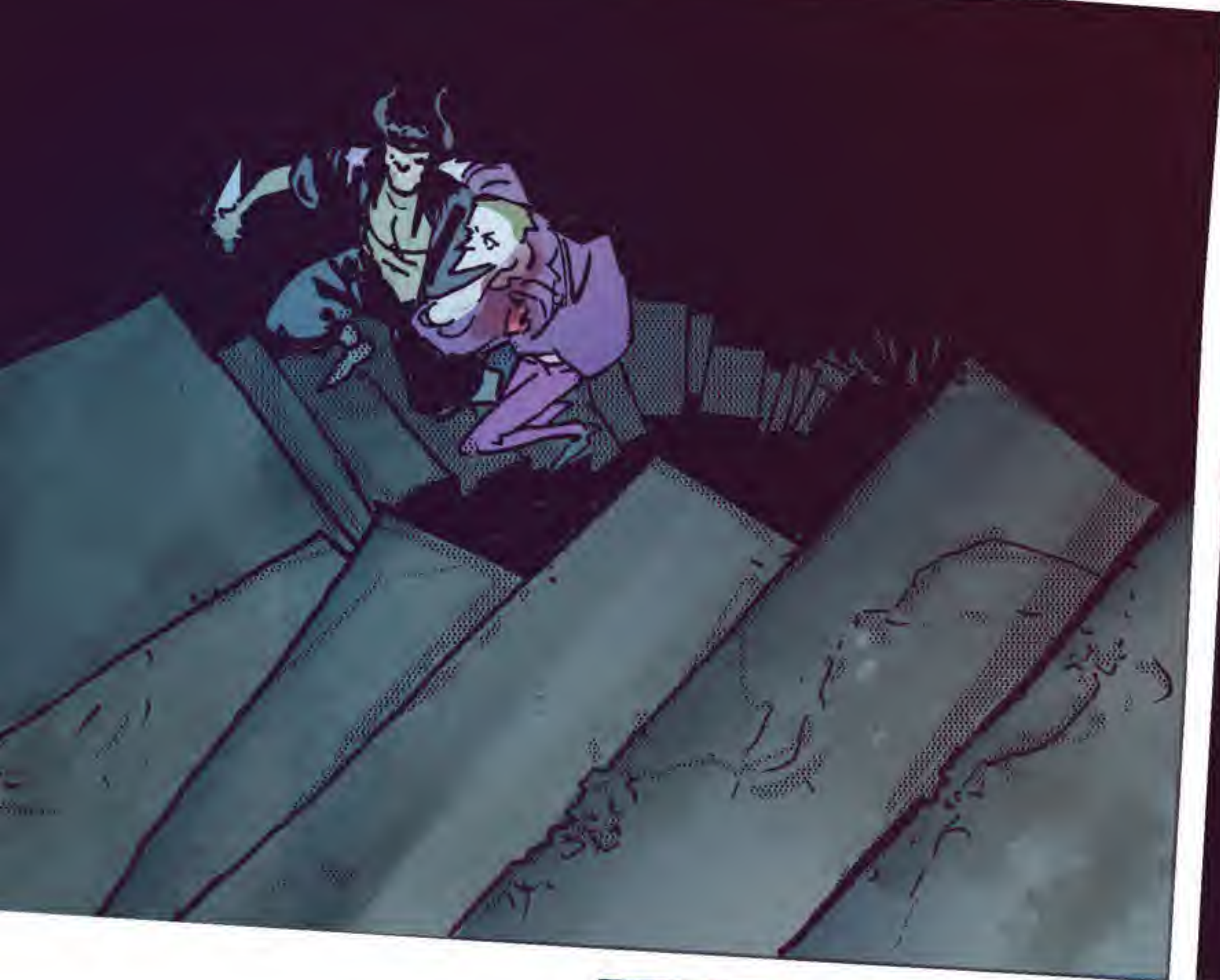
BADM BADM BADM

TIME TO GO?

I HATE LEAVING BEFORE THE END.



BUT A MAN WITH WEEPING SOFT TISSUE'S IN NO PLACE TO ARGUE.



YOUR DAGGER'S **MOIST** WITH THE **FINAL KILL**. FIVE THOUSAND AND FORTY MURDERS. YOU'VE GOT WHAT YOU WANTED.



HERE'S WHERE YOU MAKE GOOD. I GAVE YOU **BATMAN'S HEART**. SO IT'S **SHAMBA-LA**, HERE WE --

SHOOM

--COME?

JOKER!

THIS IS
COMMISSIONER
GORDON! YOU
AND YOUR
ACCOMPLICE
ARE
SURROUNDED!
I WILL NOT
HESITATE TO
FIRE!

PUT YOUR
HANDS ON YOUR
HEAD AND KISS
THE GROUND!

ANY
OTHER
MOVEMENT
AND WE WILL
BE FORCED
TO--

BANG

BANG

BANG

BANG

...TO THINK THAT **MADMAN'S** LIFE COULD POSSIBLY BE WORTH YOURS? YOU'RE SO **STUPID**, BRUCE. AND IT'S GIVEN THE STAG A WORKING KEY TO SHAMBA-LA.

QUIET, CRANSTON.

I NEED YOU TO SAVE MY LIFE.

CAUTERIZE THE WOUND.

...IT WILL **HURT**.

...IF YOU **DID** TRAIN ME, THEN YOU KNOW THAT'S **NEVER** MATTERED.

DO IT.

HHNNNGGGG

FWIP

YOU WANT TO
KNOW...WHY I'D SAVE
THE JOKER?

I--I **TOLD** YOU,
CRANSTON. YOU THINK **OUR**
LIVES ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN
THEIRS. THAT'S HOW...I **KNOW**
I WAS RIGHT...I KNOW I DIDN'T
LEARN FROM YOU...

BECAUSE
THEY ALL ARE.

THEY
ALL ARE.

THEY
ALL...

NO,
BRUCE.

76

GOTHAM GENERAL
HOSPITAL.



LOOK AT **YOU!**
BACK FROM THE DEAD
AND **FREE** OF PENETRATING
WOUNDS! SO **THAT'S**
HOW YOU DO IT.

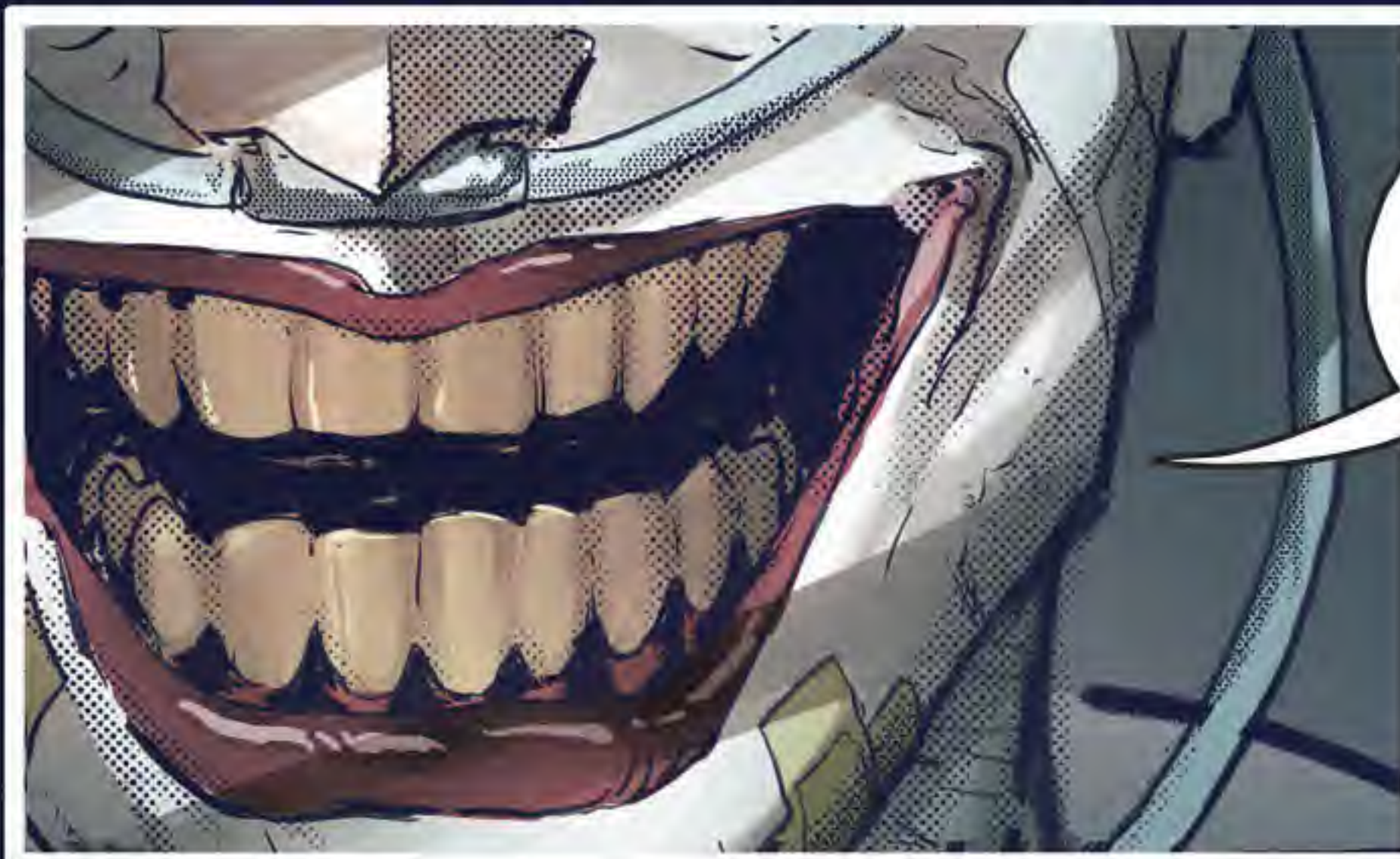
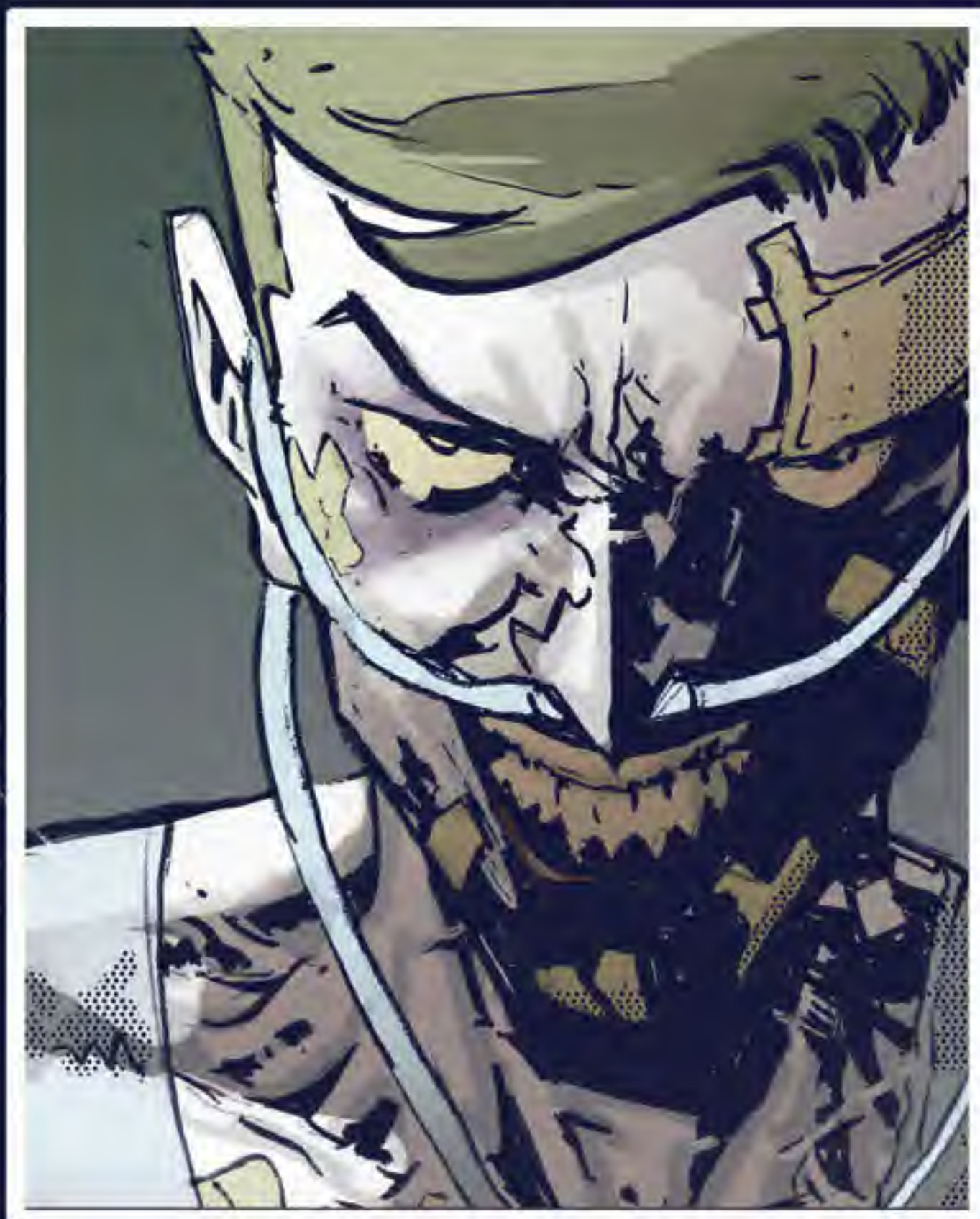
YOU THINK
I WOULDN'T
NOTICE?



I LIKE OUR
ITINERARY---JUST
ONE SUGGESTION?
THIS IS WHY YOU
BROUGHT ME ON,
AFTER ALL.

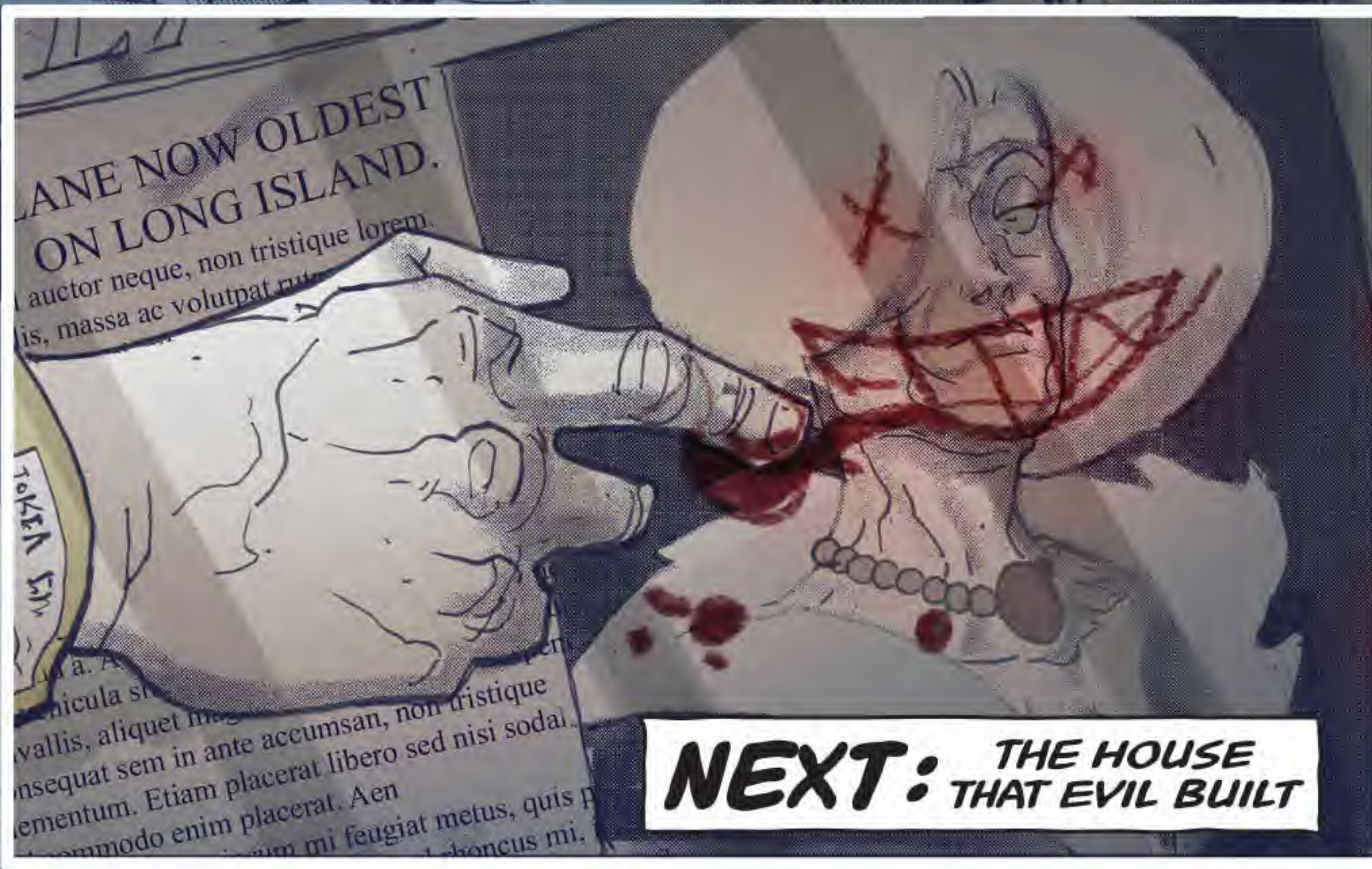
WE **MADE** IT.
BUT HAVE YOU
REALLY HURT THE
SHADOW AS MUCH AS
YOU WANT? ARE YOU
SATISFIED?





IF IT WERE
ME AND **BATMAN**,
I JUST COULDN'T
RELAX. NOT WHILE HIS
FAMILY WAS STILL
BREATHING.

SO
WE'VE GOT
ONE LAST
STOP TO
MAKE.



NEXT: THE HOUSE
THAT EVIL BUILT





THE COVE.



HRRNNNNN

HOLD ON, MASTER BRUCE...

...WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?

STABBED WITH A PREHISTORIC DAGGER INTERWOVEN WITH METAPHYSICAL CIRCUITRY.

WOUNDS FROM THE STAG DO NOT **HEAL**. THIS IS **FRUITLESS**, PENNYWORTH.

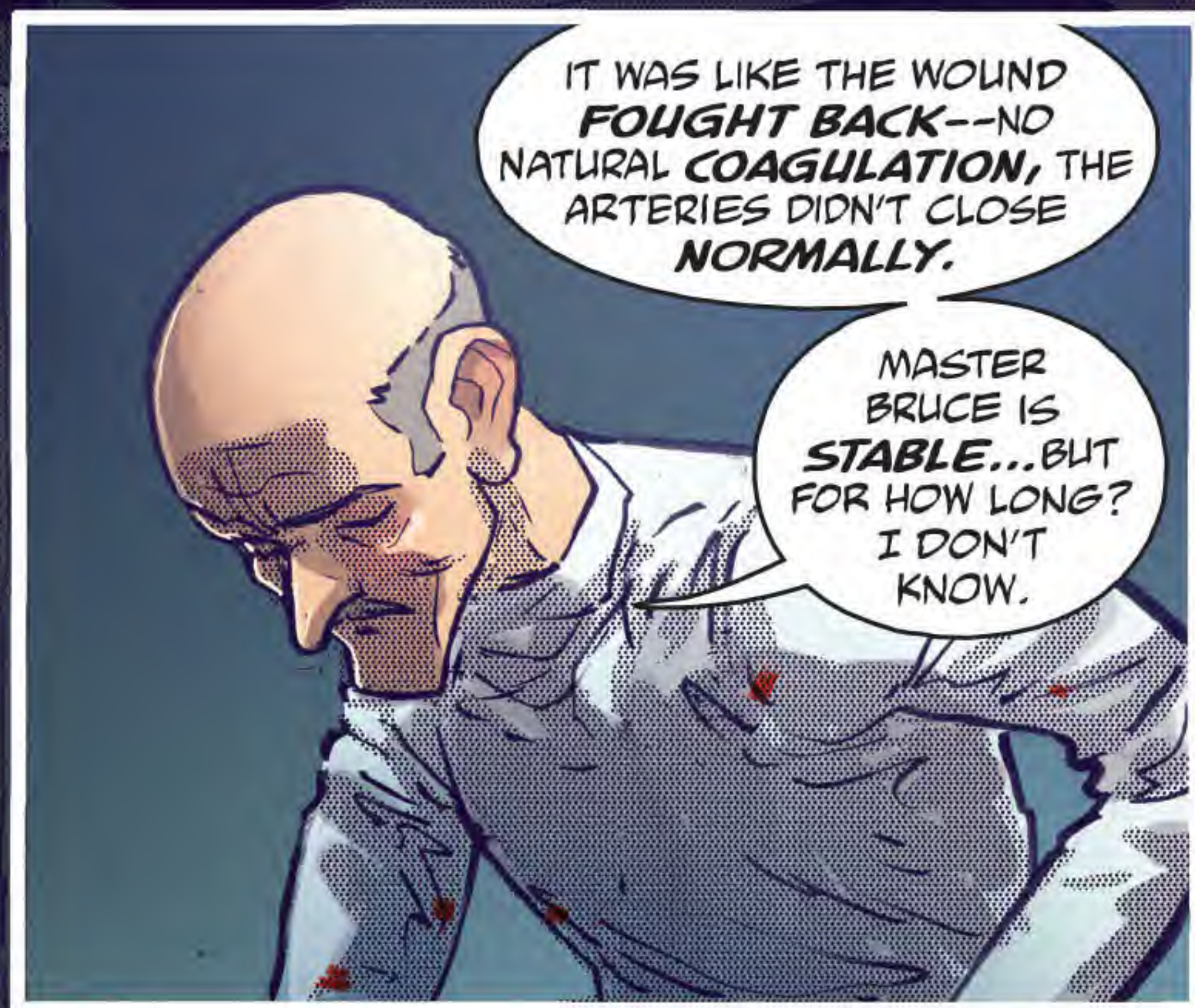
SHUT UP AND HAND ME THE **STAPLE GUN**.

YOU DON'T KNOW **EVERYTHING**, SHADOW.

HOURS
LATER.



...YOU WERE
RIGHT.



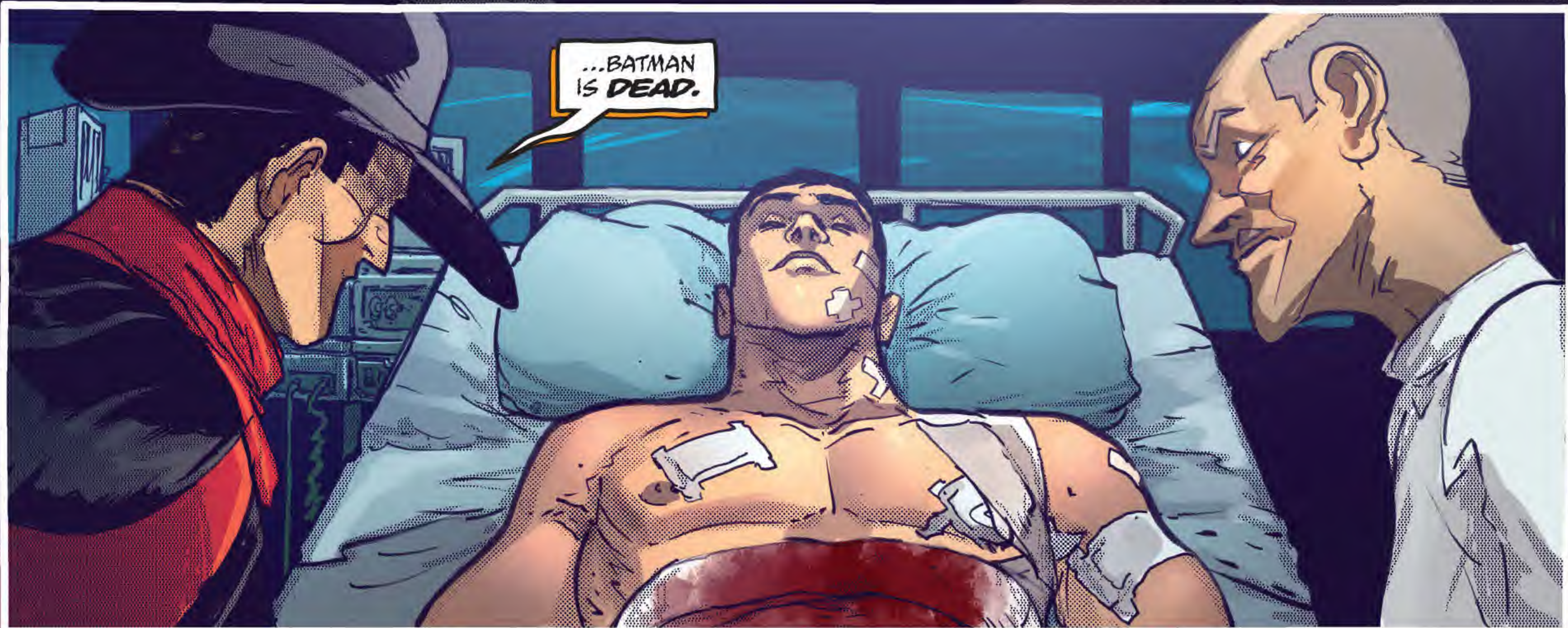
IT WAS LIKE THE WOUND
FOUGHT BACK--NO
NATURAL COAGULATION, THE
ARTERIES DIDN'T CLOSE
NORMALLY.

MASTER
BRUCE IS
STABLE...BUT
FOR HOW LONG?
I DON'T
KNOW.

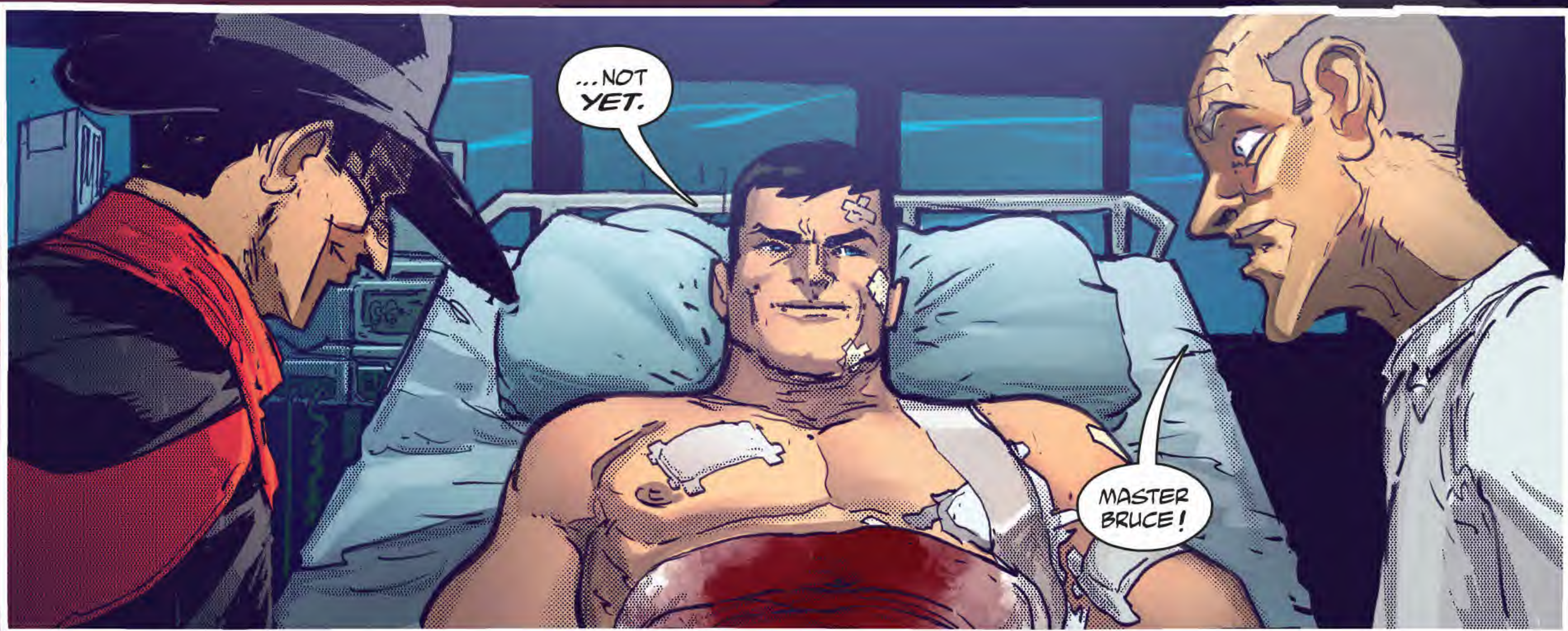


ALL WE'VE DONE
IS DELAY THE
INEVITABLE.

THE WOUND **WILL**
FESTER. THE
STAG'S ANCIENT
SICKNESS **WILL**
CREEP. THE
STRIKE **WILL**
KILL HIM IN TIME...

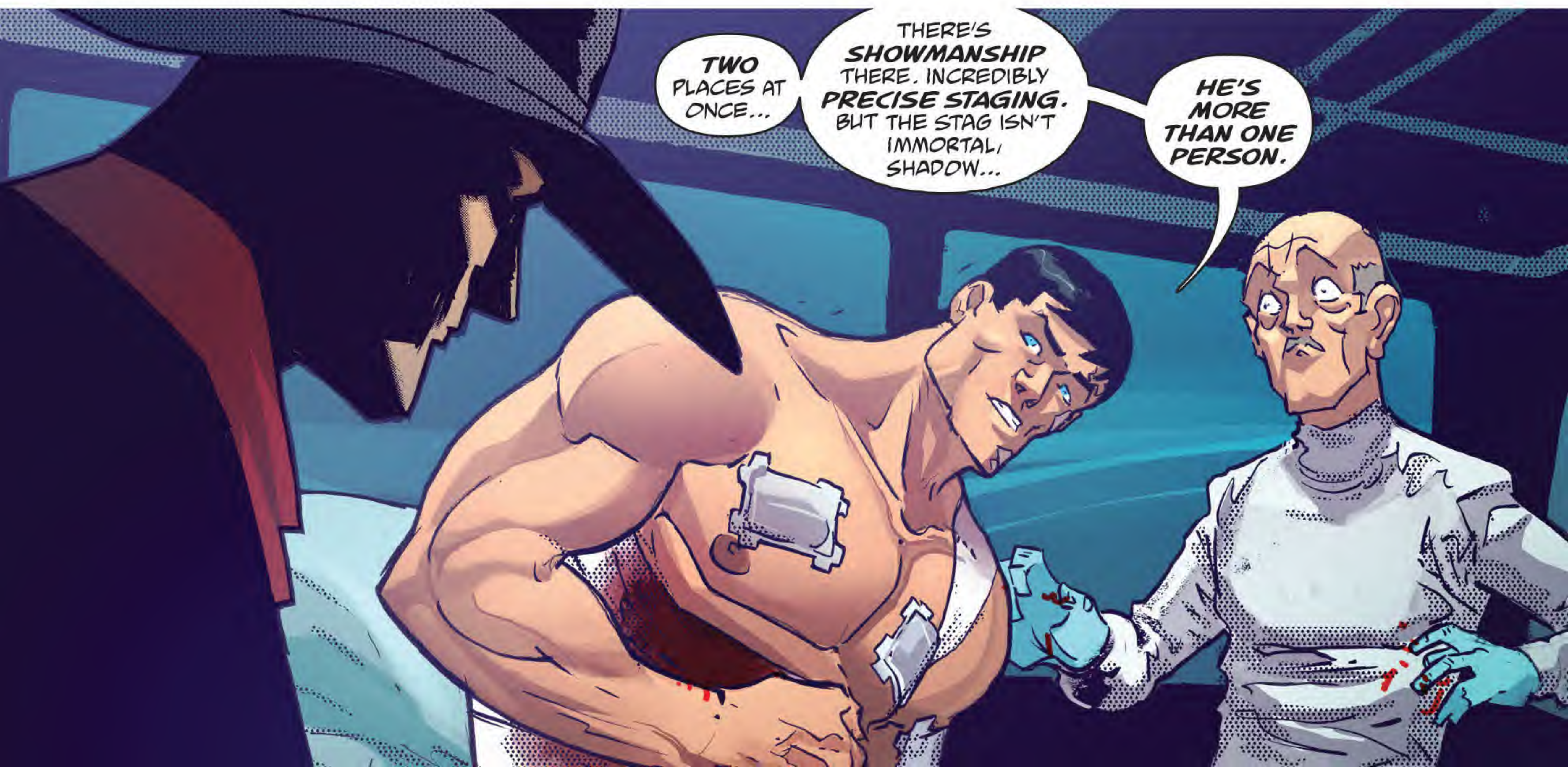
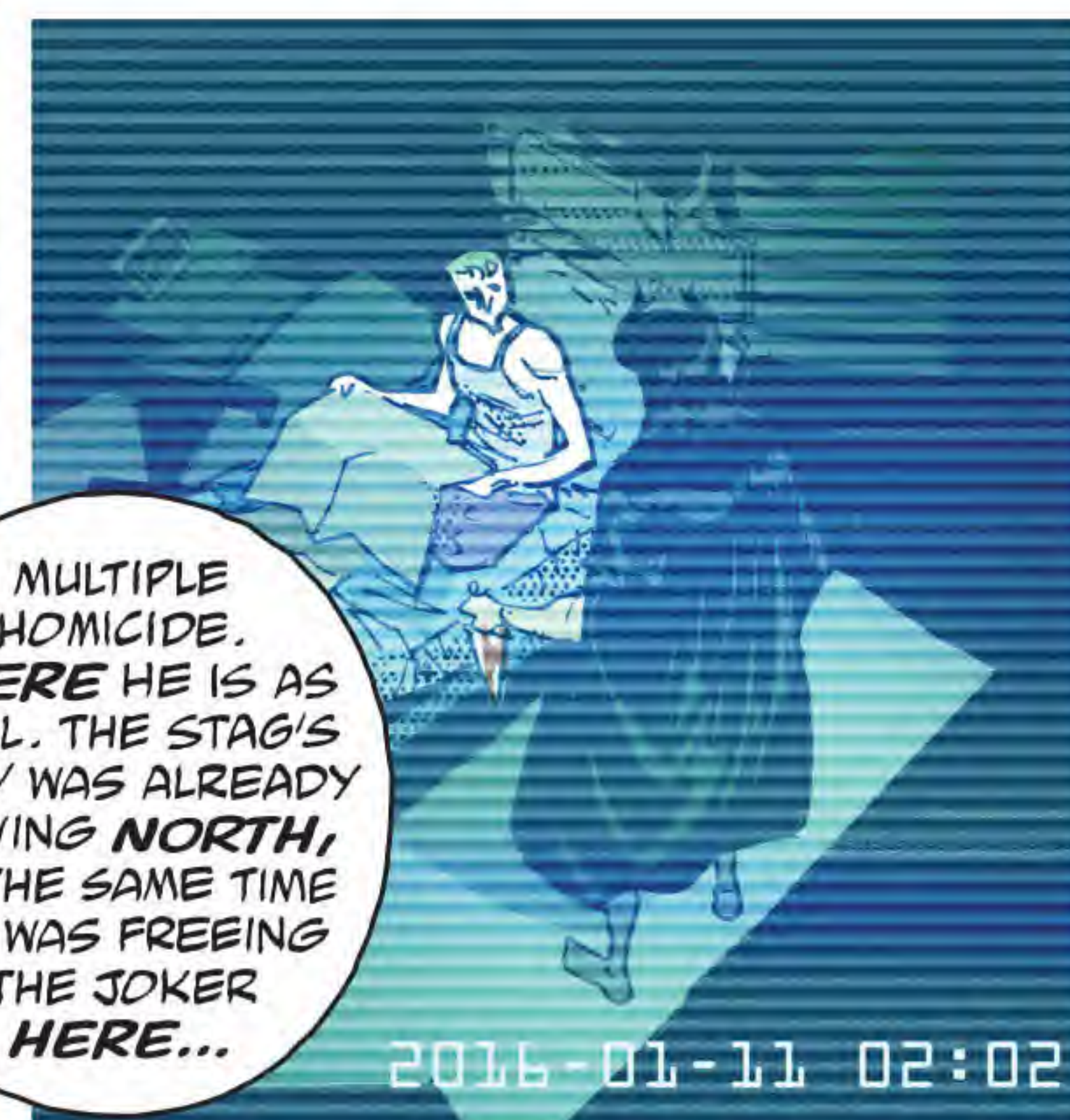
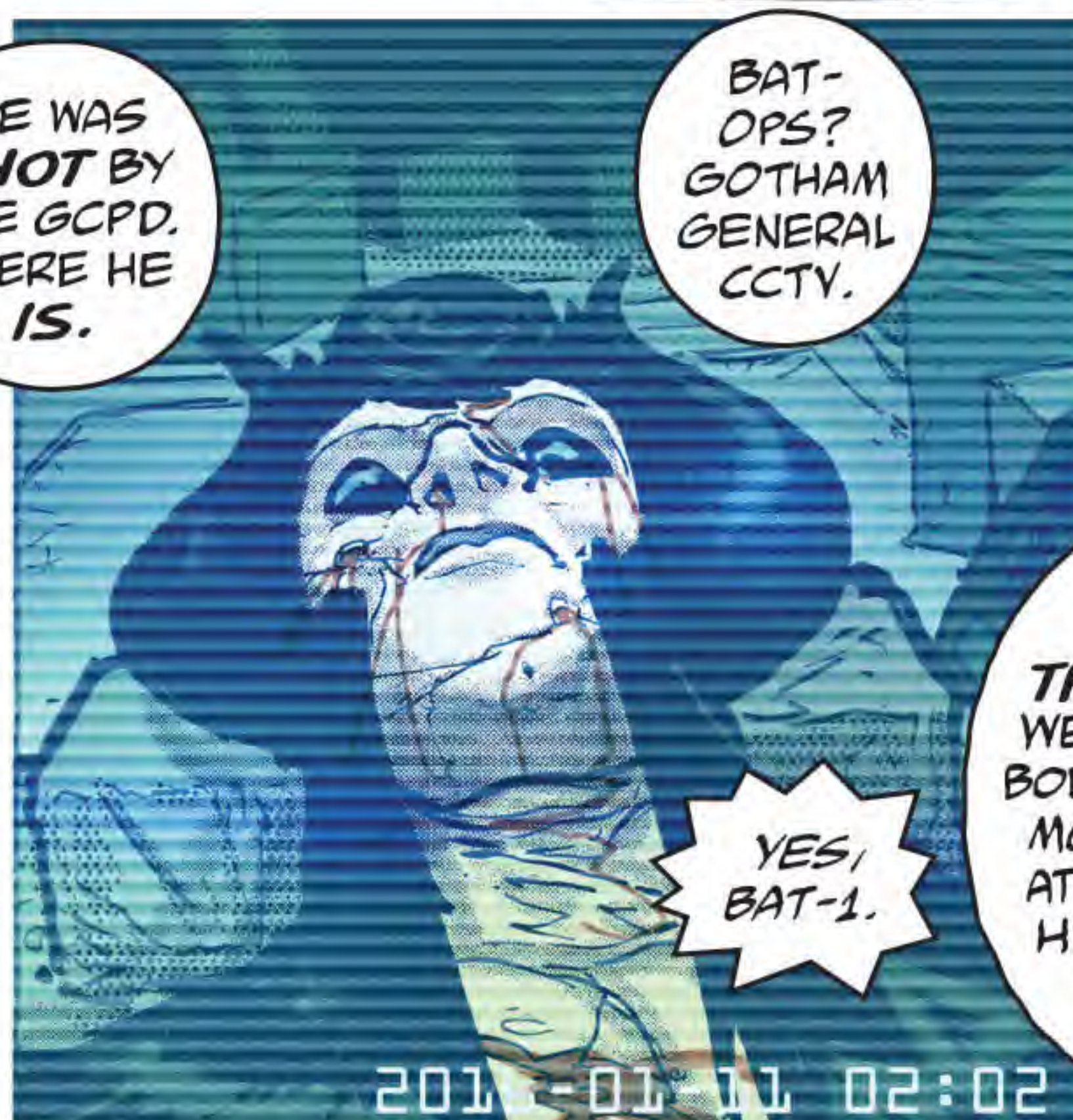
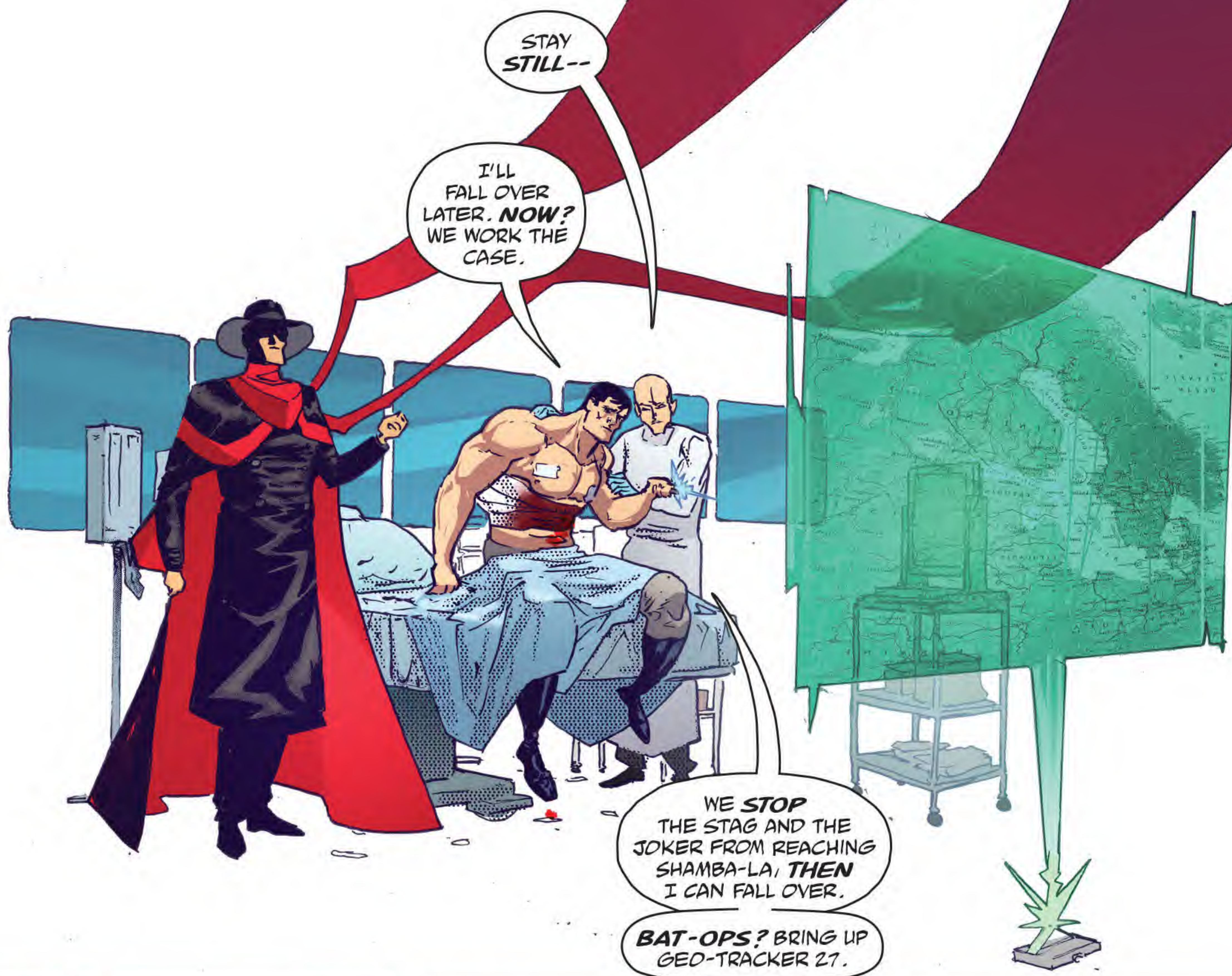


...BATMAN
IS DEAD.



...NOT
YET.

MASTER
BRUCE!

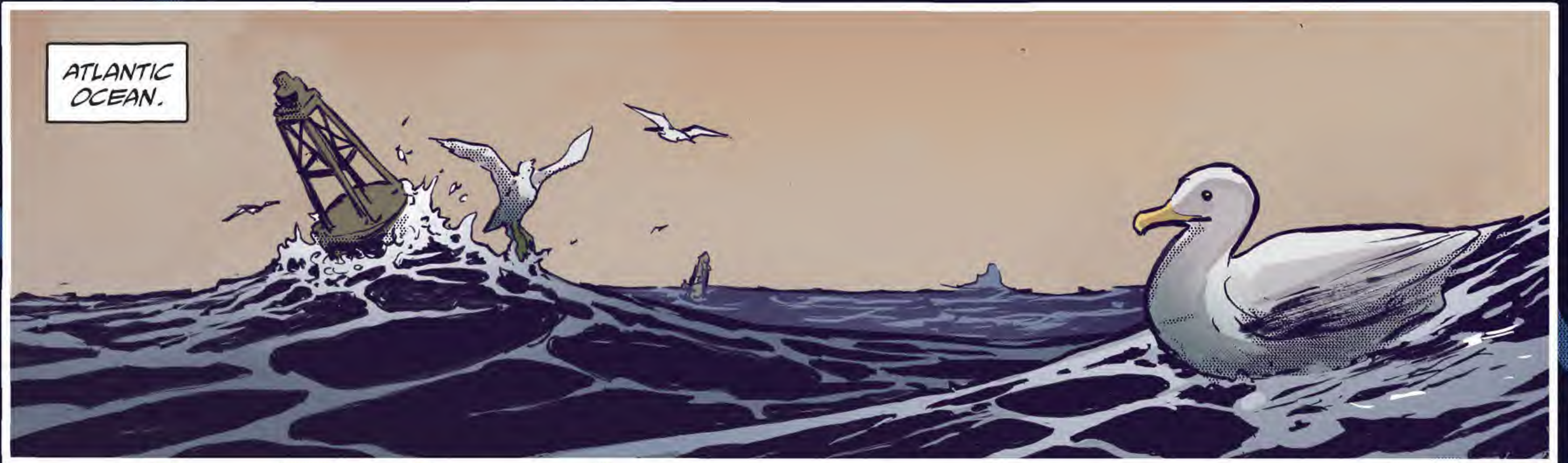




"YOU'VE BEEN
FIGHTING AN
ARMY."

EAST EGG.

LONG ISLAND,
NEW YORK.



ATLANTIC
OCEAN.



FAROE
ISLANDS.



A DARK PLACE.

KEEP
QUIET,
MARGO...

SHUT UP,
HARRY.

YOU.
WHAT THE
HELL DO YOU
THINK YOU'RE
DOING?

US?



WE'RE ON
VACATION.



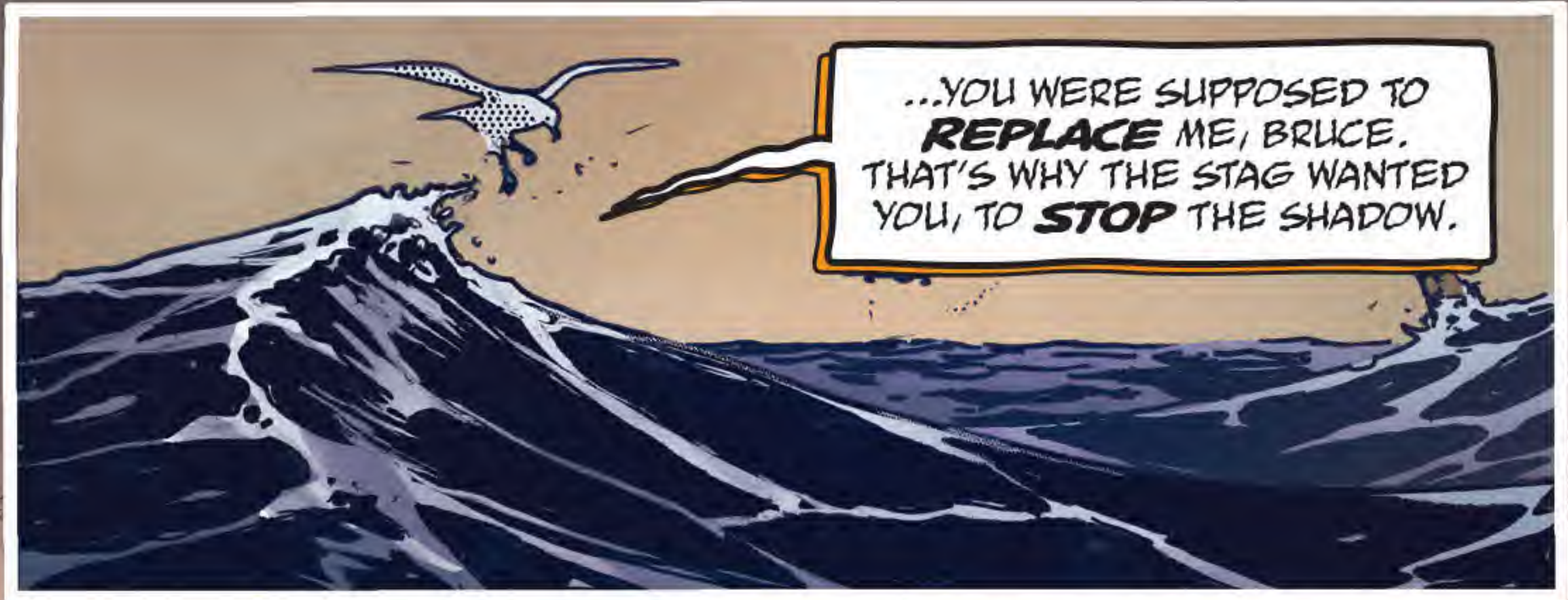
AND
YOU?

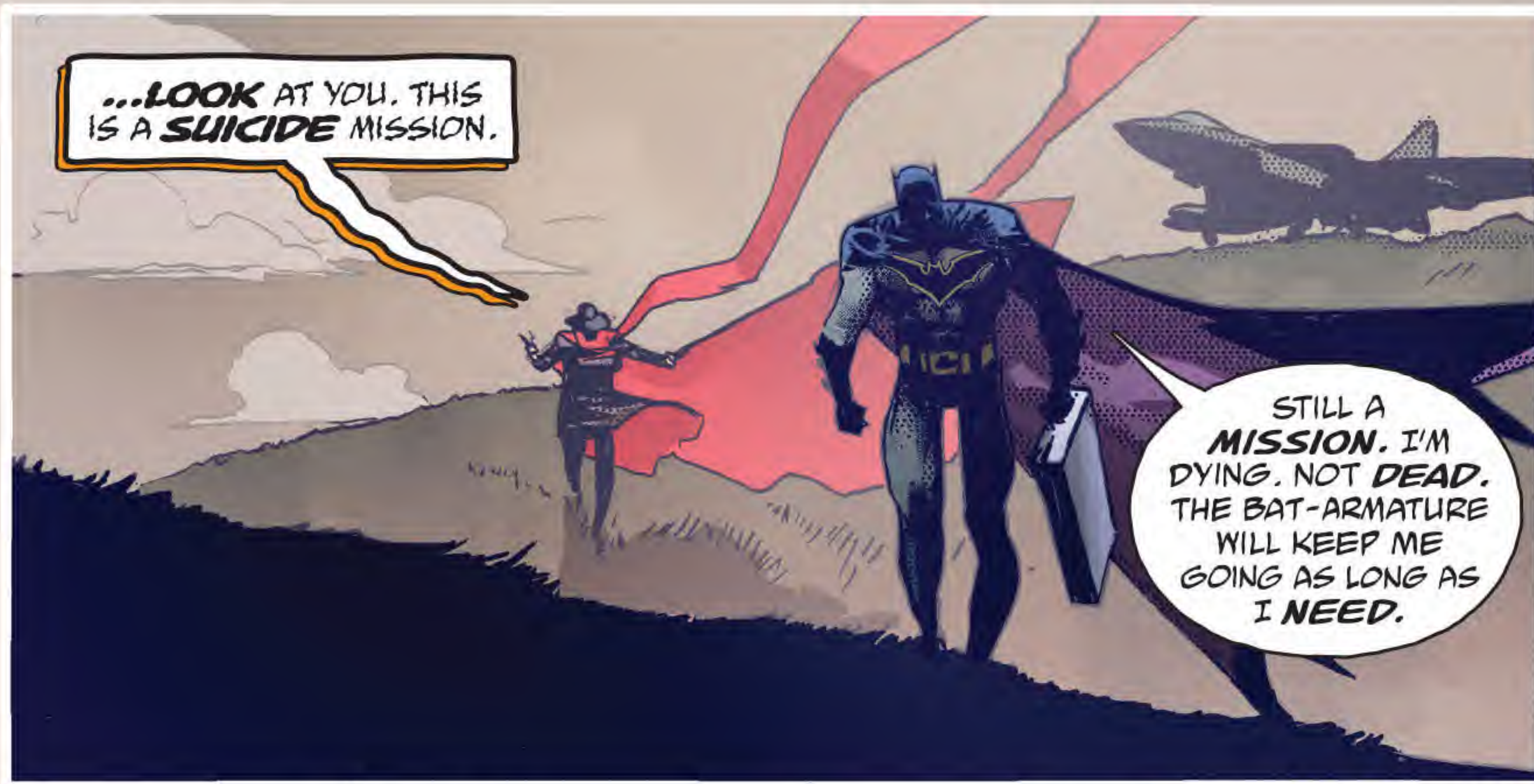


TWO
WET
PIÑATAS
NAMED
MARGO
AND
HARRY.



WRIGGLE
ON, FRIENDS...





STILL A **MISSION**. I'M DYING. NOT **DEAD**. THE BAT-ARMATURE WILL KEEP ME GOING AS LONG AS I **NEED**.



INTO THE MOUTH OF MADNESS...



LOOK AT THE WALLS---
SOMETHING
LIVES HERE.
AND HAS FOR
A WHILE.

IT'S A
STORY. THE
STAG'S
STORY.

DESCENDED
FROM THE
FIRST KILLER.
IMMORTAL.

THE STAG'S
DAGGERS
COME FROM THE
SAME CHTHONIC
PLACE.

HE USES THEM FOR **ONE**
PURPOSE---THE **DEATHS**
OF FIVE THOUSAND AND
FORTY OF THE WORLD'S BEST.

THE JOKER LIVES, THANKS TO YOUR
CHILDISH VIEWS. AND YOU, **DEAD** ON
YOUR FEET, ARE THE **FINAL VICTIM.**

IF YOU HAD
IMPRISONED THE
STAG, **INTERROGATED**
HIM INSTEAD OF KILLING HIM
AGAIN AND AGAIN FOR DECADES,
IF YOUR JUSTICE WASN'T
SO **SIMPLE...**

YOU'D HAVE
SEEN HE'S
NOT IMMORTAL.
JUST **MANY**
MORTALS.

YOU
CREATED
THE STAG AS MUCH
AS YOU FOUGHT HIM.
YOU'VE KILLED HIM
ENOUGH.

"TONIGHT WE STOP HIM."

ME? I LOVE THIS GUY. I GET HIM. AND HE GETS ME.

I CAN NEVER LOOK AT SOMETHING FOR TOO LONG. BUT HE'S GOT FOCUS. BEEN WORKING ON OPENING THE SAME DOOR FOR CENTURIES.

THIS DOOR. RIGHT AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS DEN. GUY DUG HIS WAY DOWN HIMSELF. BEEN DIGGING ALL OVER THE PLANET, BUT HE FINALLY FOUND ONE.

A DOOR TO SHAMBA-LA. THE PLACE WHERE ALL MY BEST IDEAS COME FROM, WHERE THE SHADOW GOT HIS POWER--AND WE CAN GET IT, TOO.

YOU'D CALL IT EVIL. THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE--HOLDOUTS FROM THE OLD WAY OF THINKING. STAG HAS FOCUS, YEAH. BUT NO SENSE OF DRAMA.

WHEN YOU HAVE A SHADOW, OR A BATMAN, SOMEONE YOU'VE DEVOTED TIME TO, YOU DON'T JUST ABANDON THEM. YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO REMEMBER YOU BY...

LIKE THE INNARDS OF THEIR ONLY LIVING FRIENDS.

THAT'S YOUR PLAN? THEN YOU'RE AN IDIOT.

HA HA HA HA

THE SHADOW DOESN'T CARE ABOUT US. HE'S BARELY HUMAN ANYMORE. HE FORGOT HOW TO BE LONG AGO--THANKS TO HIS WAR, HIS WAR AGAINST PEOPLE LIKE YOU.

THE SHADOW DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO CARE.

I CAN
NEVER LOOK AT
SOMETHING FOR TOO
LONG, BUT HE'S GOT
FOCUS. BEEN WORKING
ON OPENING THE
SAME DOOR FOR
CENTURIES.

THIS
DOOR. RIGHT AT
THE BOTTOM OF THIS
DEN. GUY DUG HIS
WAY DOWN HIMSELF. BEEN
DIGGING ALL OVER
THE PLANET, BUT HE
FINALLY FOUND
ONE.

A DOOR
TO SHAMBA-LA.
THE PLACE WHERE ALL
MY **BEST** IDEAS COME
FROM, WHERE THE
SHADOW GOT HIS
POWER--AND **WE** CAN
GET IT, TOO.

YOU'D CALL IT **EVIL**. THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE--HOLDOUTS FROM THE OLD WAY OF THINKING. STAG HAS FOCUS, YEAH, BUT NO SENSE OF **DRAMA**.

WHEN YOU HAVE A
SHADOW, OR A BATMAN, SOMEONE
YOU'VE DEVOTED TIME TO, YOU DON'T
JUST ABANDON THEM. YOU GIVE THEM
SOMETHING TO **REMEMBER** YOU BY...

LIKE THE INNARDS
OF THEIR **ONLY**
LIVING
FRIENDS.

**THAT'S
YOUR PLAN?
THEN YOU'RE AN
IDIOT.**

THE
SHADOW DOESN'T
CARE ABOUT US. HE'S
BARELY **HUMAN** ANYMORE.
HE **FORGOT** HOW TO BE
LONG AGO--THANKS TO
HIS WAR, HIS WAR
AGAINST PEOPLE LIKE
YOU.

THE
SHADOW DOESN'T
KNOW **HOW** TO
CARE.



WRONG
AGAIN,
MARGO.

MASTER!
...LAMONT.

CRASH

AND...
BATMAN?!

GOOD
TO SEE YOU
AGAIN, MR.
VINCENT.

LOOK AT
YOU! YOU'RE SO...
FUNCTIONAL.

THAT WOUND MUST
BE **EXCRUCIATING**. ONE
COULD **HOPE**, AT LEAST.

WANT
ME TO
SHOW
YOU?

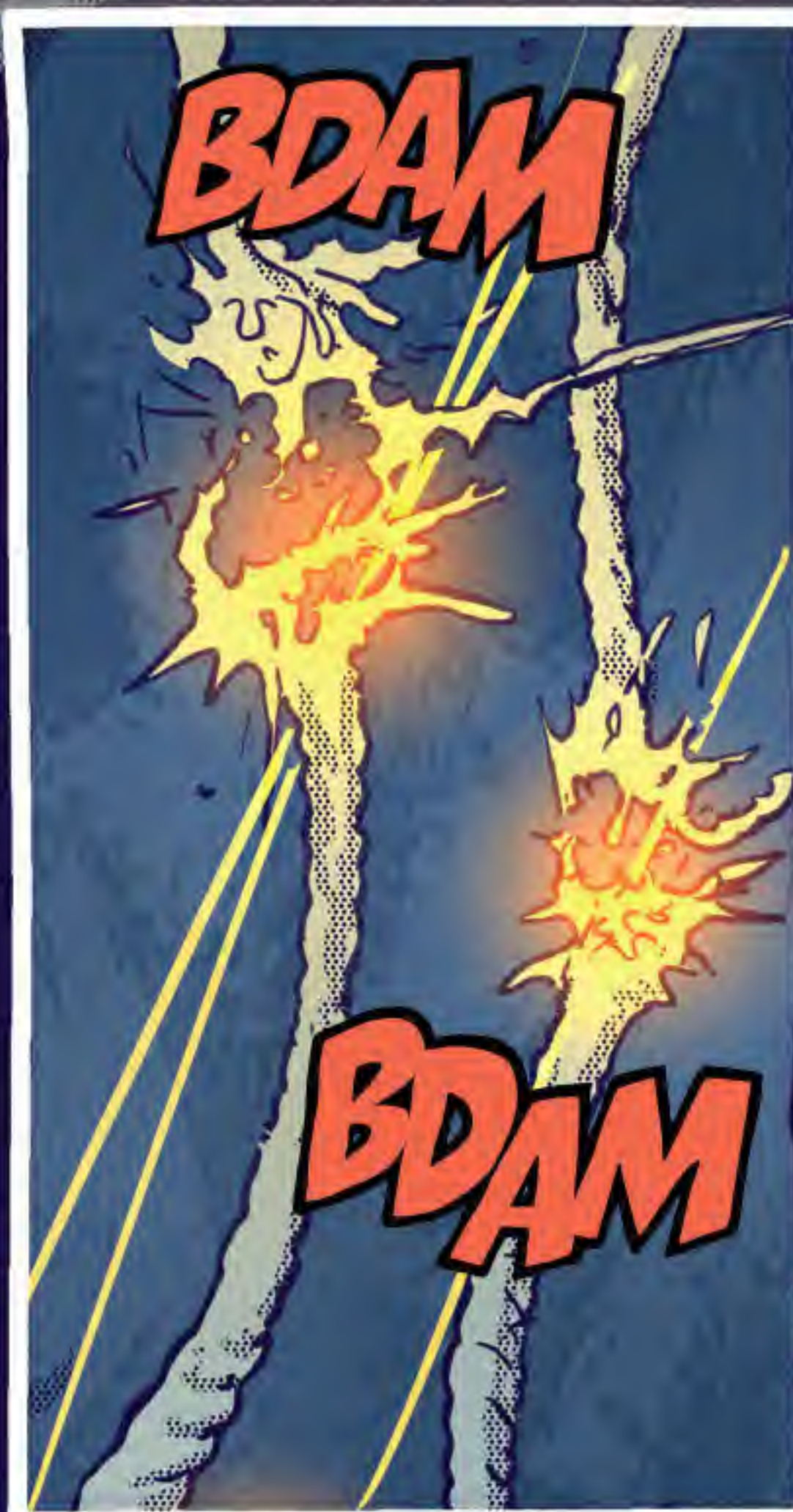




DID YOU THINK I WOULDN'T
FIND YOU, STAG? DID YOU
THINK I'D LET YOU GO?



THAT KEY MEANS **NOTHING**. YOU'LL
NEVER SET FOOT IN SHAMBA-LA.



BDAM

BDAM



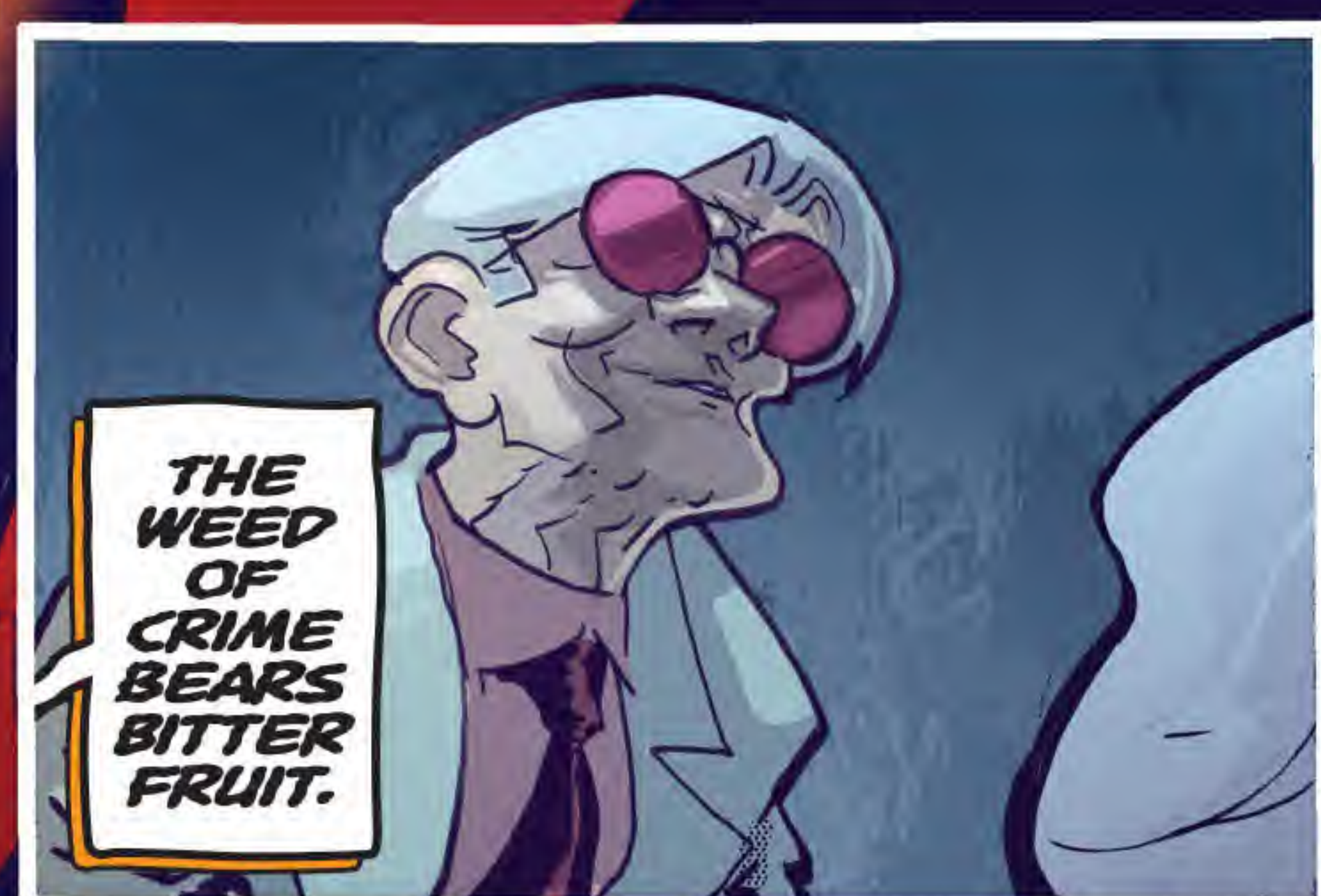
WE'VE--
WE'VE GOT
TO GET **OUT**
OF HERE!

WHY?

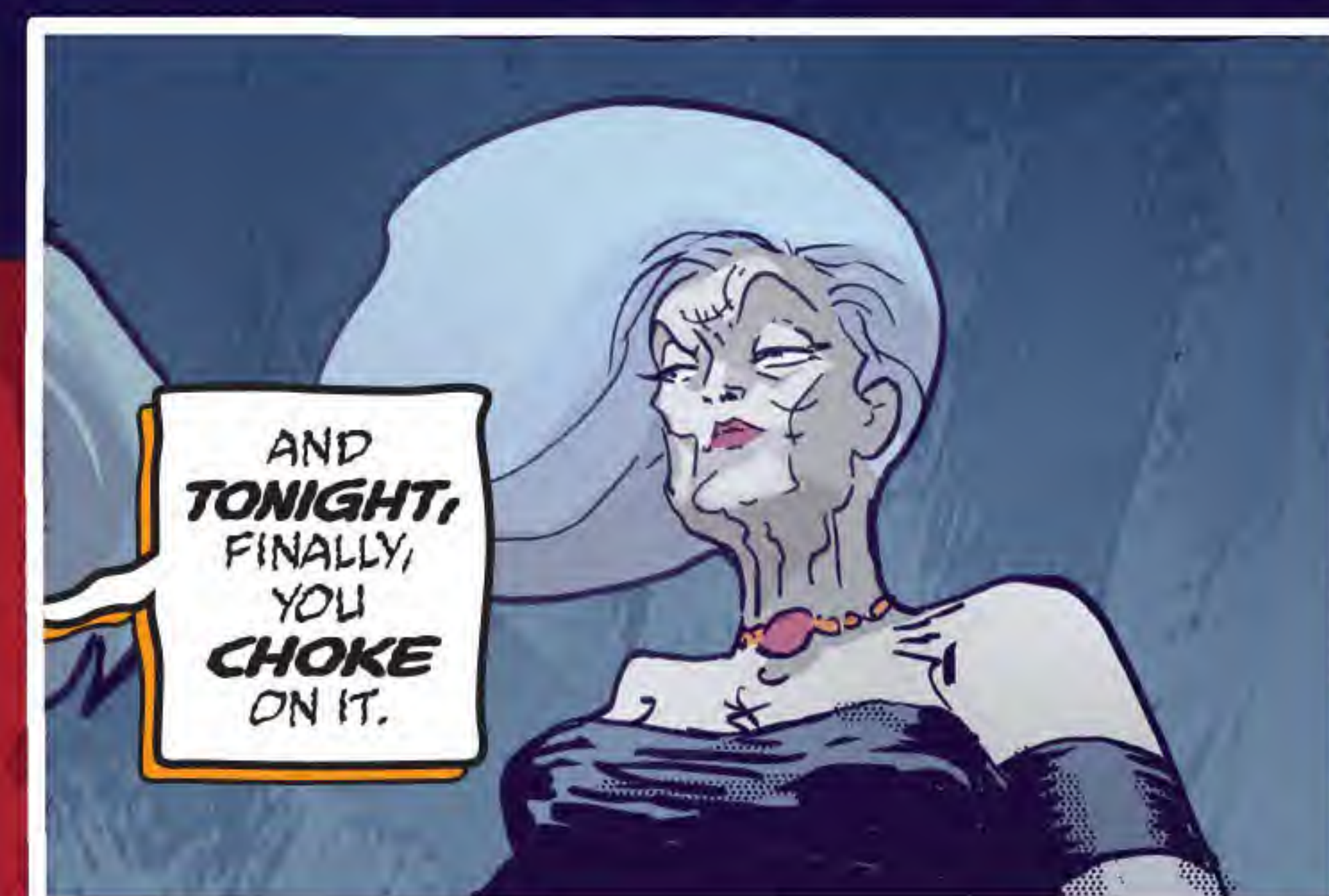


HGCK!

YOU CAN **FIGHT**,
STAG. BUT YOU
CANNOT ESCAPE
THE **TRUTH...**



THE
WEED
OF
CRIME
BEARS
BITTER
FRUIT.



AND
TONIGHT,
FINALLY,
YOU
CHOK
ON IT.



OH.

HEY.



DON'T YOU SEE WHAT THIS IS, JOKER?



ANCIENT DARK ARTS UP FOR GRABS? YOU ANGRY WE DIDN'T BRING ENOUGH FOR EVERY-BODY?



IT'S AN ACT.



THE STAG IS A LIAR.



HE'S BEEN WORKING YOU FROM THE START TO GET TO ME.



HE'S NOT IMMORTAL, JOKER.



YOU FINALLY FIGURED IT OUT, TOO? IT'S JUST LIKE YOU, BATMAN-- KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT THE WISDOM.

YOU SAID THE STAG DIDN'T HAVE FAMILY. YOU SAID THAT TO ME. YOU WERE WRONG...

A full-page comic book illustration depicting a chaotic scene in a dark, rocky cave. Batman, in his iconic blue and grey suit with a yellow bat emblem, stands in the center, looking towards the right. He is surrounded by several undead mutants with pale skin, glowing red eyes, and jagged, bone-like protrusions from their heads and bodies. Some mutants are holding weapons like knives and axes. In the background, a television set is visible on a shelf. The scene is lit with dramatic, high-contrast lighting, emphasizing the horror and action elements. Four speech bubbles are present, each containing the phrase "I AM AN HONEST SIGNAL." and one containing "THAT'S THE ONLY THING HE'S GOT."

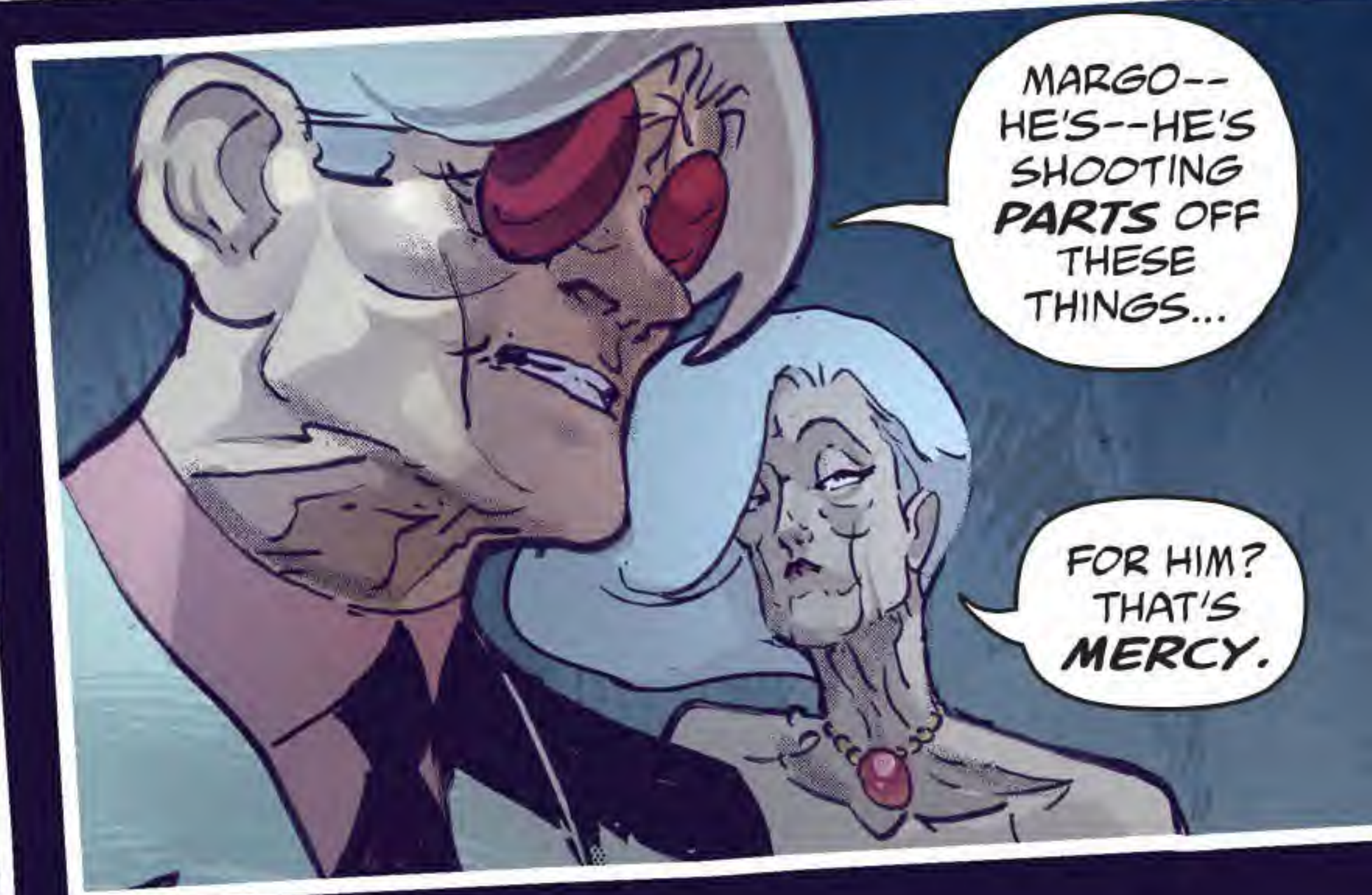
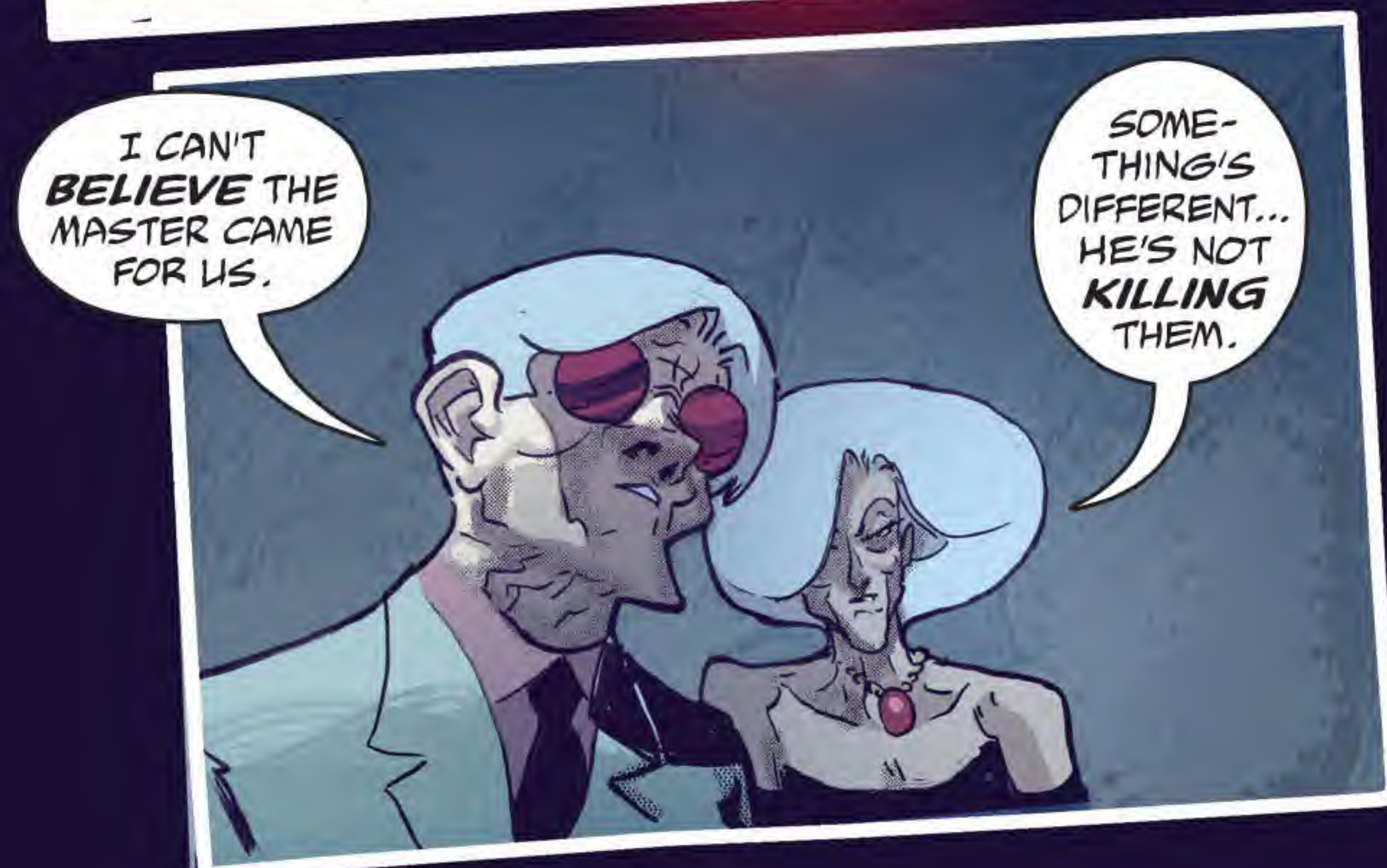
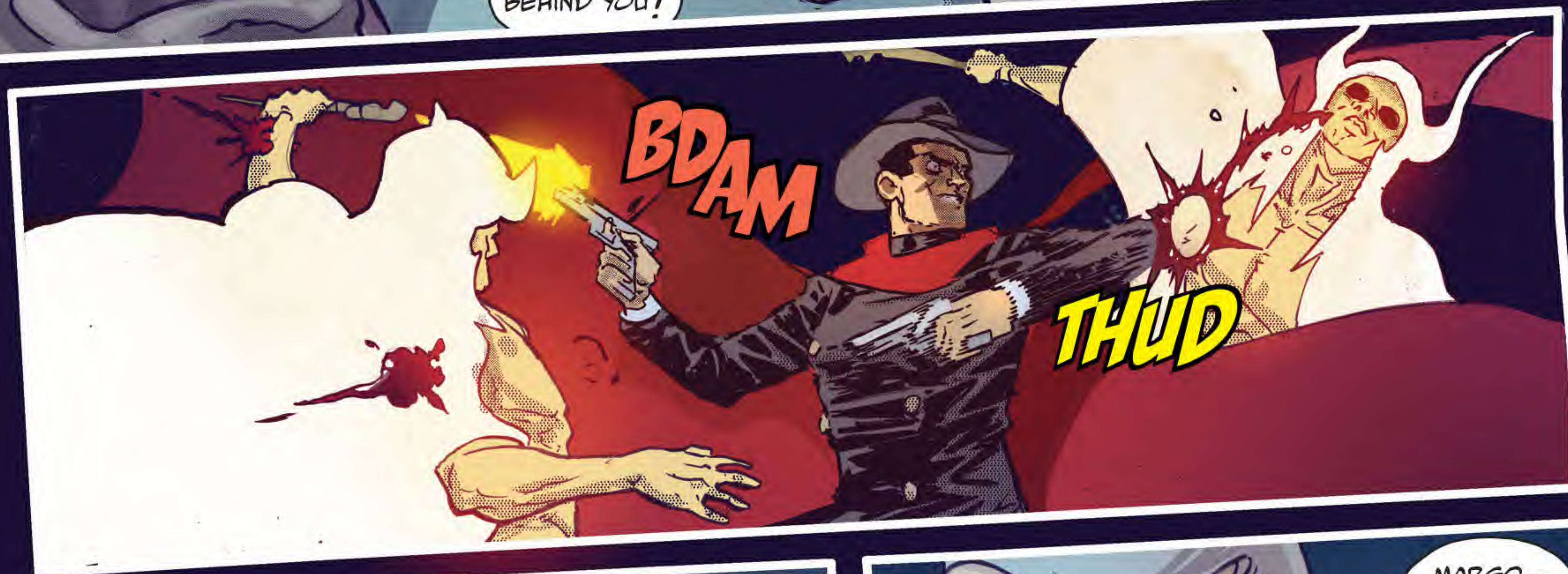
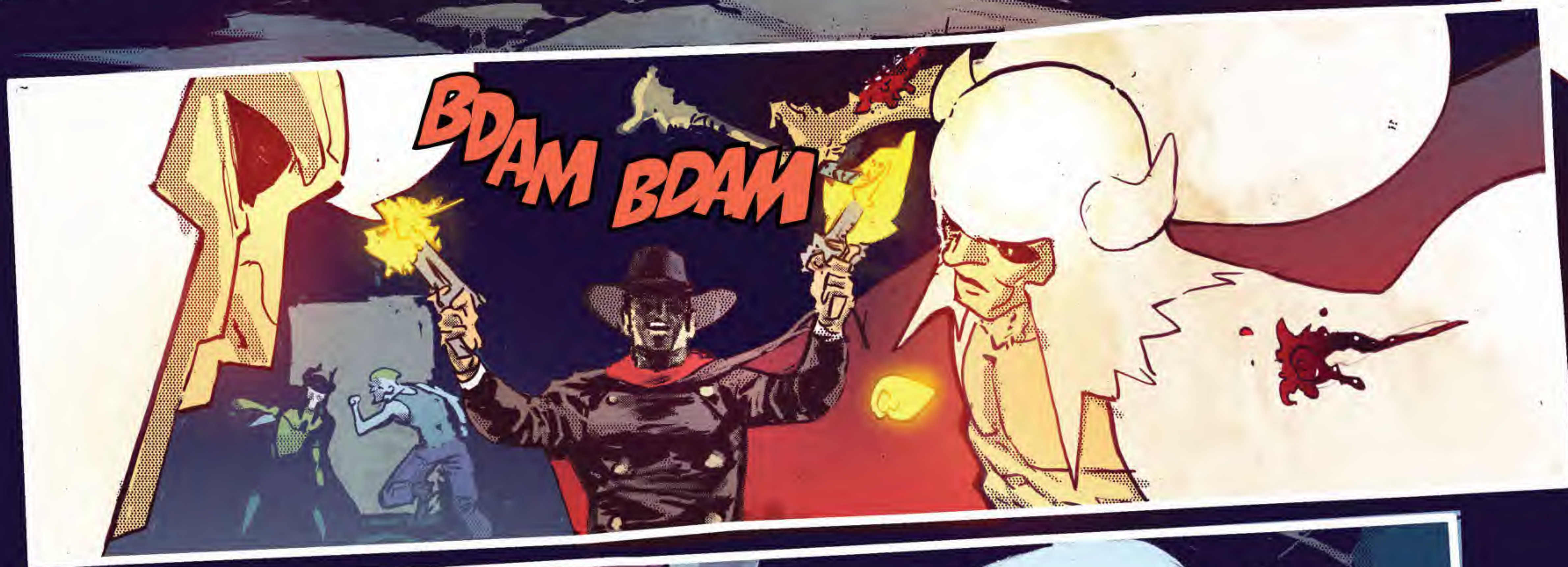
I AM AN
HONEST
SIGNAL.

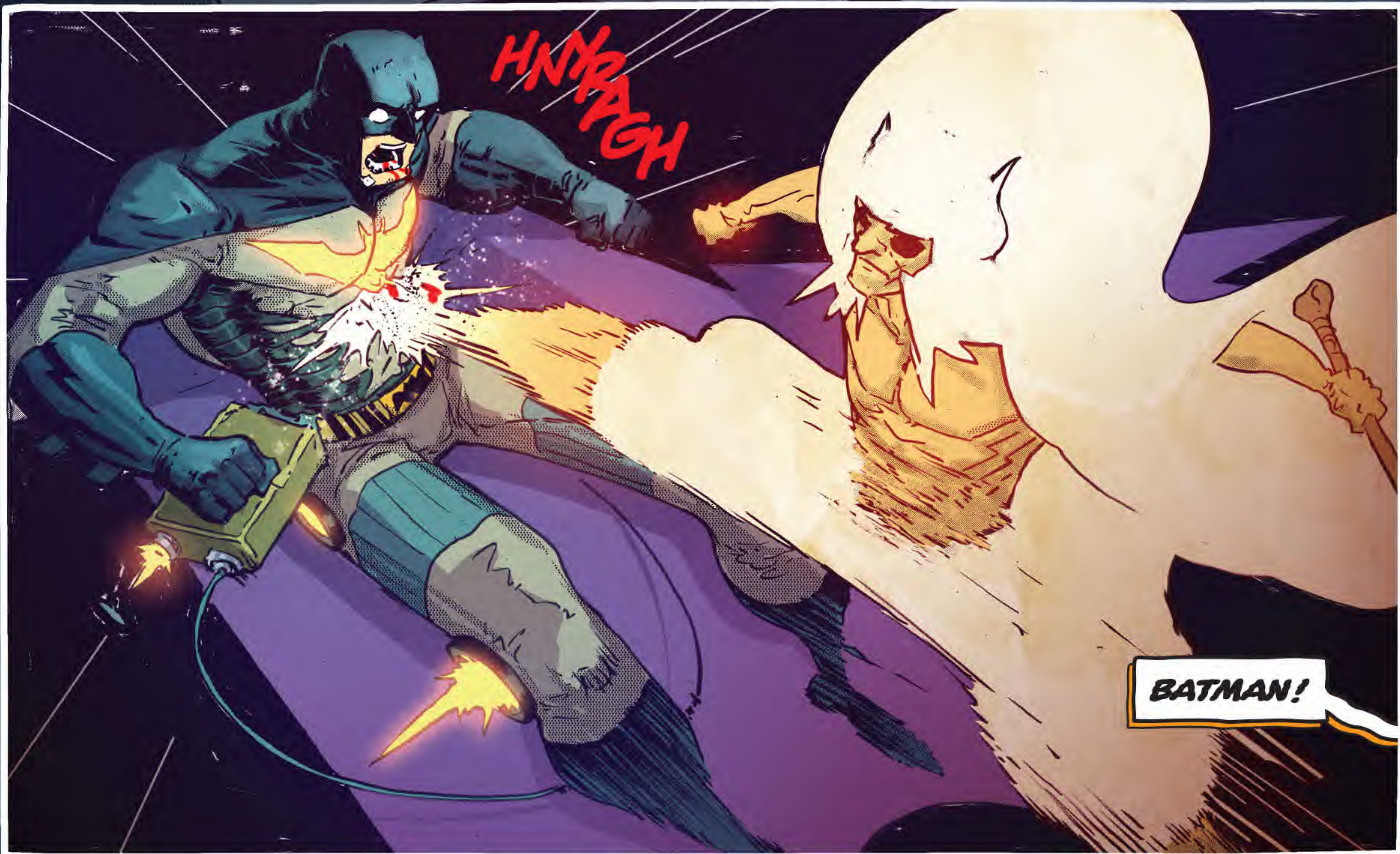
I AM AN
HONEST
SIGNAL!

THAT'S
THE *ONLY*
THING HE'S
GOT.

I AM AN
HONEST
SIGNAL.

I AM AN
HONEST
SIGNAL!





"THEY MUST
NOT BREACH
THAT
DOOR!"



SO.

WE
OPENING
THIS THING
OR NOT?





I AM AN HONEST
SIGN--**NACK!**

THESE
PEOPLE...
YOU WERE **WRONG**
ABOUT THE STAG
FOR TOO LONG,
SHADOW.

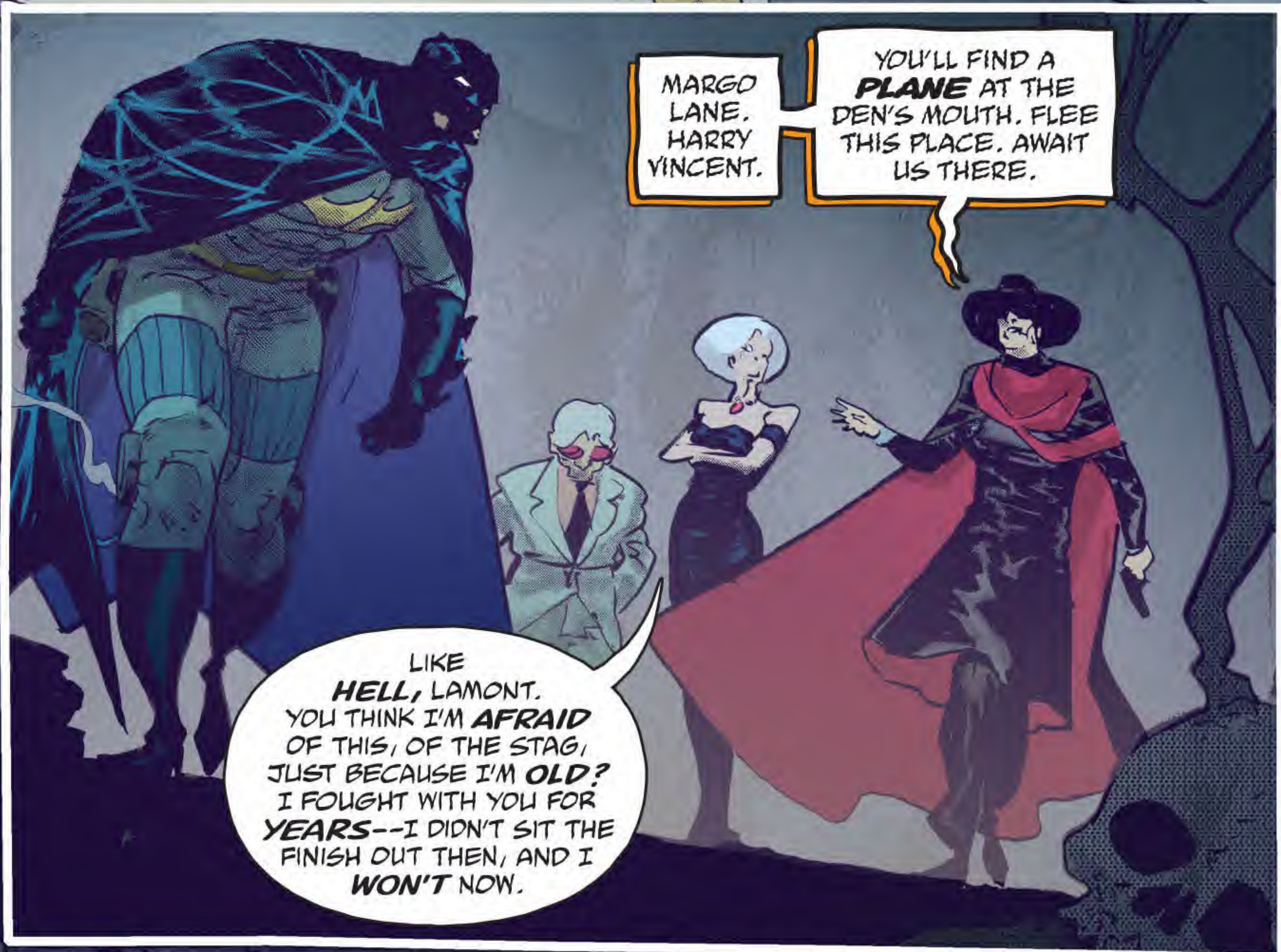
HOW DO
WE KNOW **ANY**
OF THIS IS WHAT
YOU THOUGHT
IT WAS?

I KNOW STAG
AND JOKER MUST
BE **STOPPED**.
SHAMBA-LA IS
MEANT TO
REFORM CRUEL
HEARTS. NOT
EMPOWER
THEM.



AND I KNOW YOUR
WOUND GROWS **WORSE**
BY THE MOMENT.

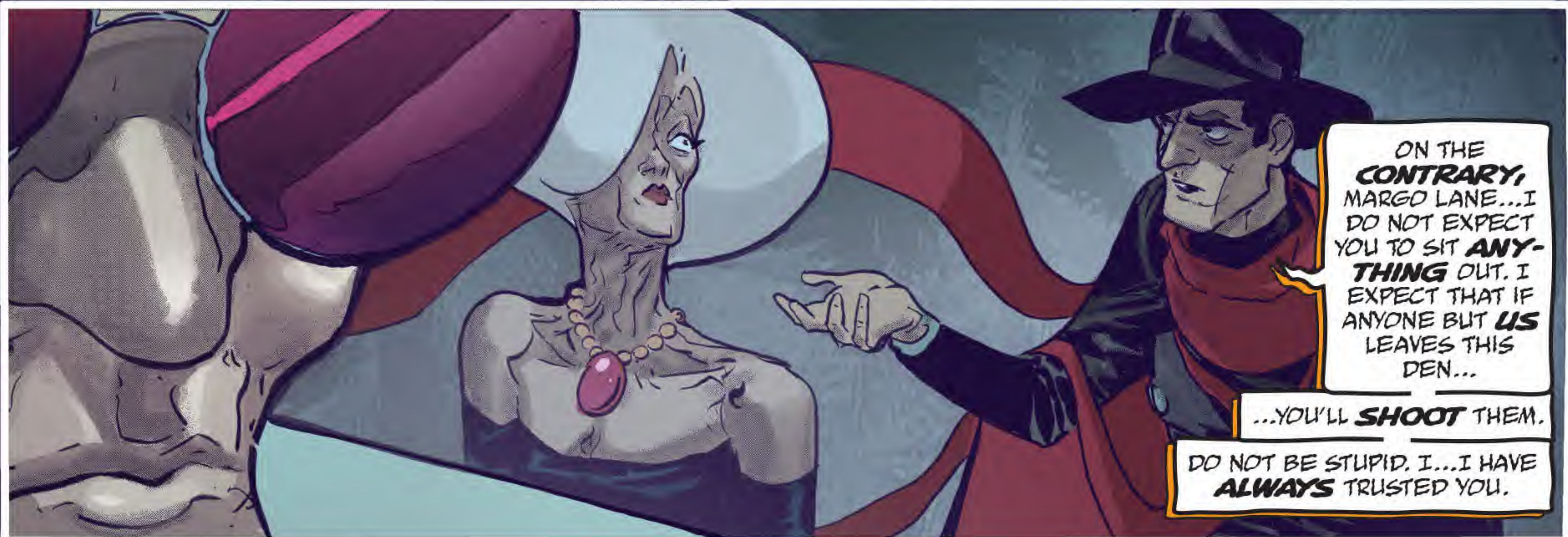
...THEN
LET'S KEEP
MOVING.



MARGO
LANE.
HARRY
VINCENT.

YOU'LL FIND A
PLANE AT THE
DEN'S MOUTH. FLEE
THIS PLACE. AWAIT
US THERE.

LIKE
HELL, LAMONT.
YOU THINK I'M **AFRAID**
OF THIS, OF THE STAG,
JUST BECAUSE I'M **OLD**?
I FOUGHT WITH YOU FOR
YEARS--I DIDN'T SIT THE
FINISH OUT THEN, AND I
WON'T NOW.



ON THE
CONTRARY,
MARGO LANE...I
DO NOT EXPECT
YOU TO SIT **ANY-**
THING OUT. I
EXPECT THAT IF
ANYONE BUT **US**
LEAVES THIS
DEN...

...YOU'LL **SHOOT** THEM.

DO NOT BE STUPID. I...I HAVE
ALWAYS TRUSTED YOU.

...SHADOW...

SAVE YOUR STRENGTH, BRUCE. THE FIGHT IS NOT **YET** OVER.

FIGHT'S NEVER OVER...

...PERHAPS **NOT**.

THE **TEACHERS** OF **SHAMBA-LA**... THEY MAY BE ABLE TO **ARREST** YOUR DEATH.

NOT... IMPORTANT... NEED TO FINISH... WHAT WE STARTED...

WHAT **I** STARTED. WHAT I **DID**-- TRAINING YOU TO BE MY PERFECT WEAPON AGAINST THE STAG. AND THE PERFECT **LURE**...

I AM **NOT** A GOOD MAN. I DO NOT **CLAIM** TO BE. I CAN BUT PUNISH **WORSE** MEN THAN MYSELF.

STILL... COULD BE...

THE WEIGHT OF MY MISDEEDS IS A **CRUEL METRIC**. BUT THE **TEACHERS** OF **SHAMBA-LA** **SAVED** ME, BRUCE. THEY **CLEANSED** THE ROT WITHIN ME. THEY COULD **SAVE** YOU.

THE STAG MAY HAVE **KILLED** YOU...BUT IF HE OPENS THE DOOR, HE MIGHT ALSO **SAVE** YOU.

...JUST **FINISH** THIS.

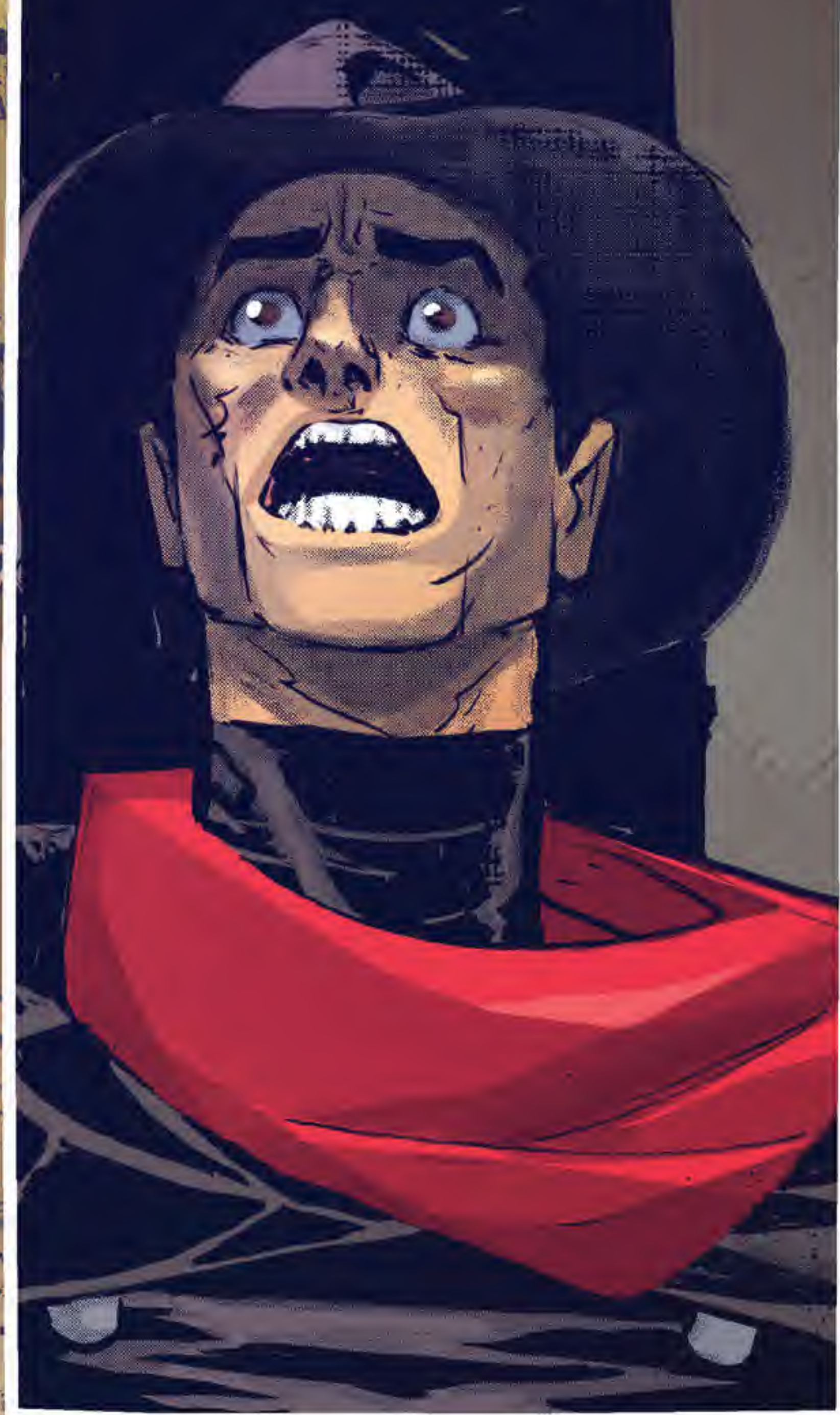
TOLD YOU, CRANSTON...IT'S NOT ABOUT ME...OR US. I DON'T...**CARE** WHO YOU REALLY ARE...NOT ANYMORE...


SHUT UP. WE'RE ALMOST--



NO.

WE'RE TOO LATE. THE STAG ISN'T **ROBBING** SHAMBA-LA...





HE'S **BURNING**
IT TO THE GROUND.

**NEXT: THE PROMISED
LAND ABLAZE**







BRUCE WAYNE.

YOU ARE DEAD.

SHALL WE DECIDE WHAT COMES NEXT?



WHO...

...WHERE AM I?



"THIS, BRUCE?"

"THIS IS SHAMBA-LA."

"WE LIVE HERE, ON A HIGHER THAUMIC FREQUENCY."

"THIS CITY YOU SAW? OUR FOOTHOLD ON YOUR PLANE OF EXISTENCE. ANCHORED BY HEAVY DIMENSIONAL BALLAST."

"THERE WE MAKE PURCHASE. TO *TEACH*."

"SHAMBA-LA IS NOT A PROMISED LAND. IT IS A *TRAP*."

"WE LURE YOUR WORLD'S WORST WITH *PROMISES* OF POWER."

"INSTEAD, WE OFFER TWO PATHS: *REDEMPTION* OR *DEATH*."

"ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, NO EVIL MEN *LEAVE* SHAMBA-LA."

"IT HAS BEEN THAT WAY FOR *MILLENNIA*."

"LONG BEFORE THE MAN YOU KNOW AS THE *SHADOW*, **TWO BROTHERS** SOUGHT US OUT."

"THEY TOOK THE BAIT, TWO OF THE WORLD'S WORST, SEEKING THE POWER TO DO *WORSE*."

"*ONE* ENTERED. PRESENTED WITH THE SAME CHOICE WE GIVE ALL EVIL MEN, HE CHOSE *DEATH*."

"WE CAST HIS CARCASS INTO HIS BROTHER'S ARMS."

"IN THAT MOMENT, THE BROTHER SWORE *REVENGE*. A *LEGACY* PASSED TO HIS HEIRS."

"THAT IS *THE STAG*."

"A *LINEAGE* OF EVIL, WORKING TO ONCE AGAIN SULLY THEIR HEARTS ENOUGH TO OPEN OUR DOOR."

"THOUGH OUR POWER OVER EARTHLY MATTER IS VAST, WE CANNOT RESURRECT OUR OWN SOULS. DEAD ON EARTH IS DEAD FOR US."

"THEY COULD *DO* IT, BRUCE. THEY COULD *KILL* US ALL."

"UNLESS YOU STOP THEM."

THE
STAG'S ARMY IS
UNENDING!

FIGHT!
PROTECT THE
BALLAST
TORCH!

I AM AN
HONEST
SIGNAL.

THEN TELL ME! YOU SPENT
GENERATIONS OPENING THE
DOOR TO SHAMBA-LA!

THOUSANDS OF
YEARS TO REACH
THIS PLACE, ONLY TO
DESTROY IT?

WHY?

HEARD OF
REVENGE?

HNNG!



...YOU WANT ME
TO BECOME **THE**
SHADOW.

HE
TOLD
YOU.

YOUR PREDECESSOR CAME TO US
LONG AGO. A CRUEL MAN, WHO ACCEPTED
THE PATH TO **REDEMPTION**.

"WE TAUGHT HIM TO CLOUD
MEN'S MINDS. TO MOVE IN
THE WORLD AS WE DO. TO
EXPUNGE EVIL.

"THE SHADOW WAS HIS
SENTENCE, YES. AND
HIS PATH TO REDEMPTION.

"BUT HE IS
IMPERFECT.

"BUT YOU
IMPROVED UPON
WHAT HE TAUGHT YOU,
BRUCE. YOU COULD BE
THE **BEST** VERSION
OF HIM.

"WE CAN GIVE YOU
HIS POWER. THE
POWER TO BE **MORE**
THAN A MAN.

"YOU MUST CHOOSE:
BECOME **IMMORTAL**,
UNSHACKLED TO WAR
ETERNAL AGAINST EVIL...

"...OR RETURN TO LIFE
IN **MORTAL** FORM, TO
FIGHT AND FIGHT...AND
ONE DAY DIE."

"AS *ALL* MEN DO."

YOU.


QUIET.

BUMP

FIFTY YEARS WE'VE
FOUGHT, STAG. **FIVE
THOUSAND AND
FORTY DEATHS.** IT
ENDS TODAY--AS YOU
SOW EVIL...

GLUH.

--SO YOU SHALL
REAP IT!



SO,
BRUCE WAYNE...
WILL YOU ACCEPT
OUR *GIFT*?

...NO.

...BRUCE
WAYNE WILL *DIE*.
ONE DAY, HE
HAS TO.

AND
BATMAN
WILL LIVE ON,
WITH A NEW
FACE.

IT
MUST BE
BIGGER
THAN ME...
THERE'S
NO OTHER
WAY.

THERE
IS NO
BATMAN
WITHOUT
DEATH.

NOW
SEND ME
BACK...

"THE SAME WAY
I WENT OUT."





CRACK

GOOD ONE.



KI-CRACK

GNAH--
DAMN YOU!

IT WAS
QUIET IN MY HEAD. I
WAS ALL OUT OF
IDEAS...

...FOR
AT LEAST A
MINUTE
THERE.



FULL DISCLOSURE--
WHEN WE GET INTO YOUR
HEAD IT WON'T BE QUITE
AS **CLEAN**.

GO ON,
FOOLS.

THE
SHADOW
DOES NOT
BEG.

MAYBE
NOT.



BUT HE
COULD KEEP
HIS **HEAD**
DOWN.

FWACK

YOU
LOOK NICE AND
FRESH--

KRAK

WAYNE. I TOLD
YOU THE TEACHERS
COULD REVIVE YOU.

I WASN'T GOING TO
COME BACK. BUT I SAW HOW
YOU WERE DOING.

HOW **I'M** DOING IS IRRELEVANT.
THE **TEACHERS** ARE LOSING TO THE
STAG'S ARMY. THEY'RE **DYING**.

AND WE WILL **NEVER**
OVERCOME THEM ALL.

...MAYBE
WE DON'T
HAVE TO.

THE
BALLAST
TORCH.

THEY
SHOWED ME IT--
THE **TEACHERS**. IT
ANCHORS SHAMBA-LA
IN THIS WORLD BY
CONDENSING **HIGHER**
DIMENSIONAL
ENERGY.

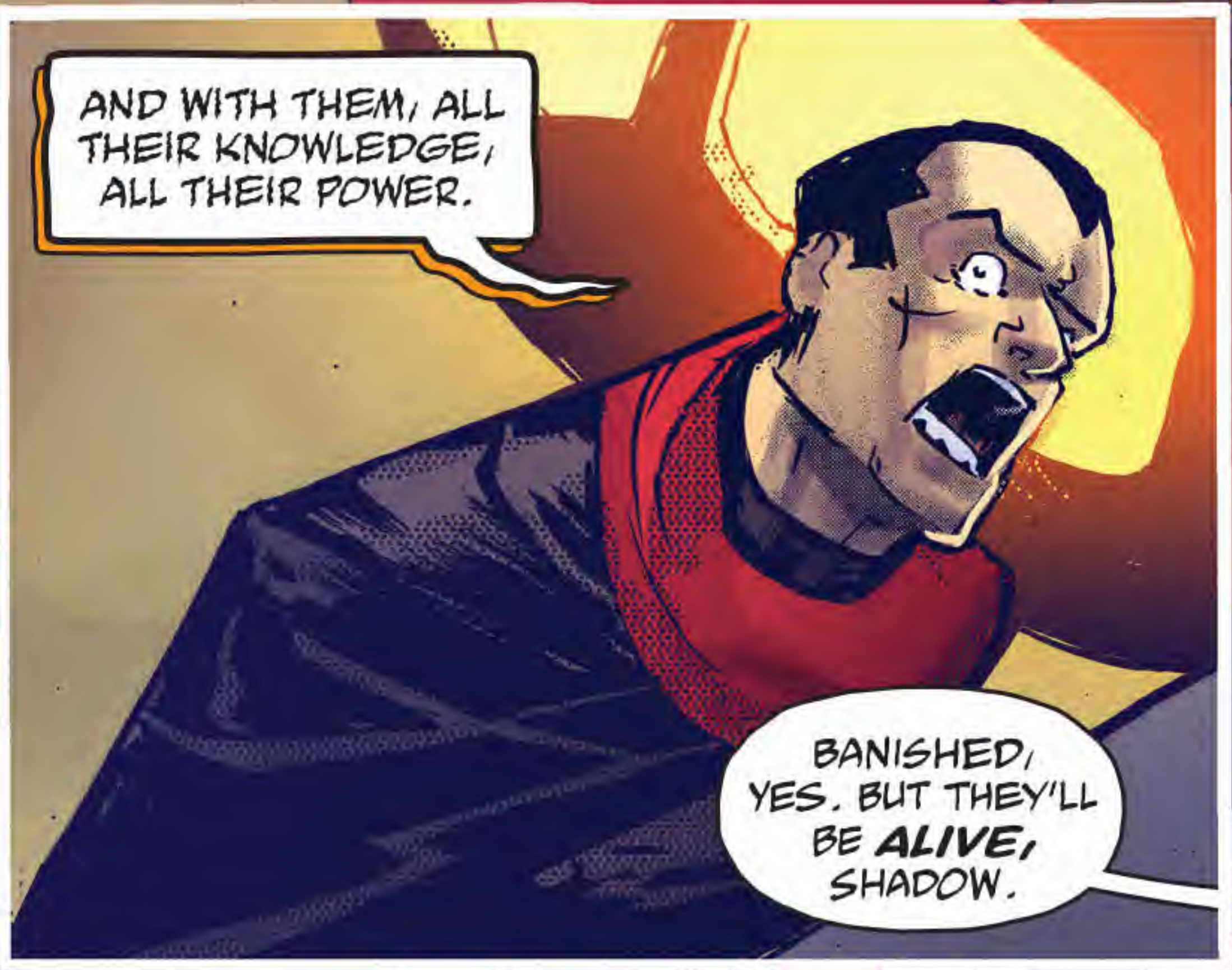
YOU WERE **TRAINED**
HERE. YOU COULD **SHIELD** YOUR
MIND. BUT THE **SHOCKWAVE** FROM
ITS DESTRUCTION WOULD OVER-
COME ANYONE ELSE.



...NO.

IT'S OUR
BEST SHOT,
SHADOW.

WHAT YOU ASK, BATMAN...IF I
DESTROY THE BALLAST
TORCH, THE TEACHERS WILL BE
BANISHED FROM EARTH.



AND WITH THEM, ALL
THEIR KNOWLEDGE,
ALL THEIR POWER.

BANISHED,
YES. BUT THEY'LL
BE **ALIVE**,
SHADOW.



IF THE TEACHERS
ARE GONE...THEY
WILL NEVER BE
ABLE TO LIFT MY
SENTENCE. MY
WORK WILL NEVER
BE DONE.



MY **PUNISHMENT**
WILL NEVER END...



I WILL BE
CURSED TO WALK
AS THE SHADOW
FOREVER.



I AM NOT A GOOD MAN. I **TOLD** YOU, BRUCE. I NEVER WAS...

I CANNOT DAMN MYSELF. I **CANNOT** DO IT.



...BUT **YOU** COULD.



...NO.

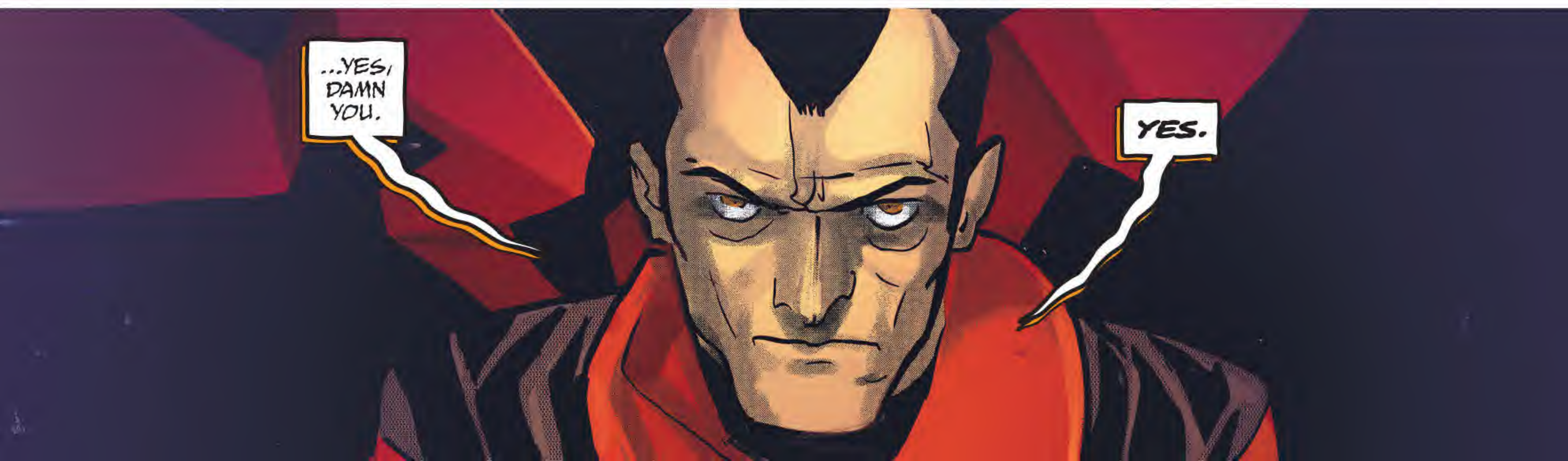
I CAN'T PULL THAT TRIGGER, CRANSTON.

THIS IS **YOU**. THIS IS **YOUR** SHOT TO TAKE, AND **YOUR** FAMILY TO SAVE.



WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT...

...THIS IS A CHOICE **ONLY** THE SHADOW CAN MAKE.



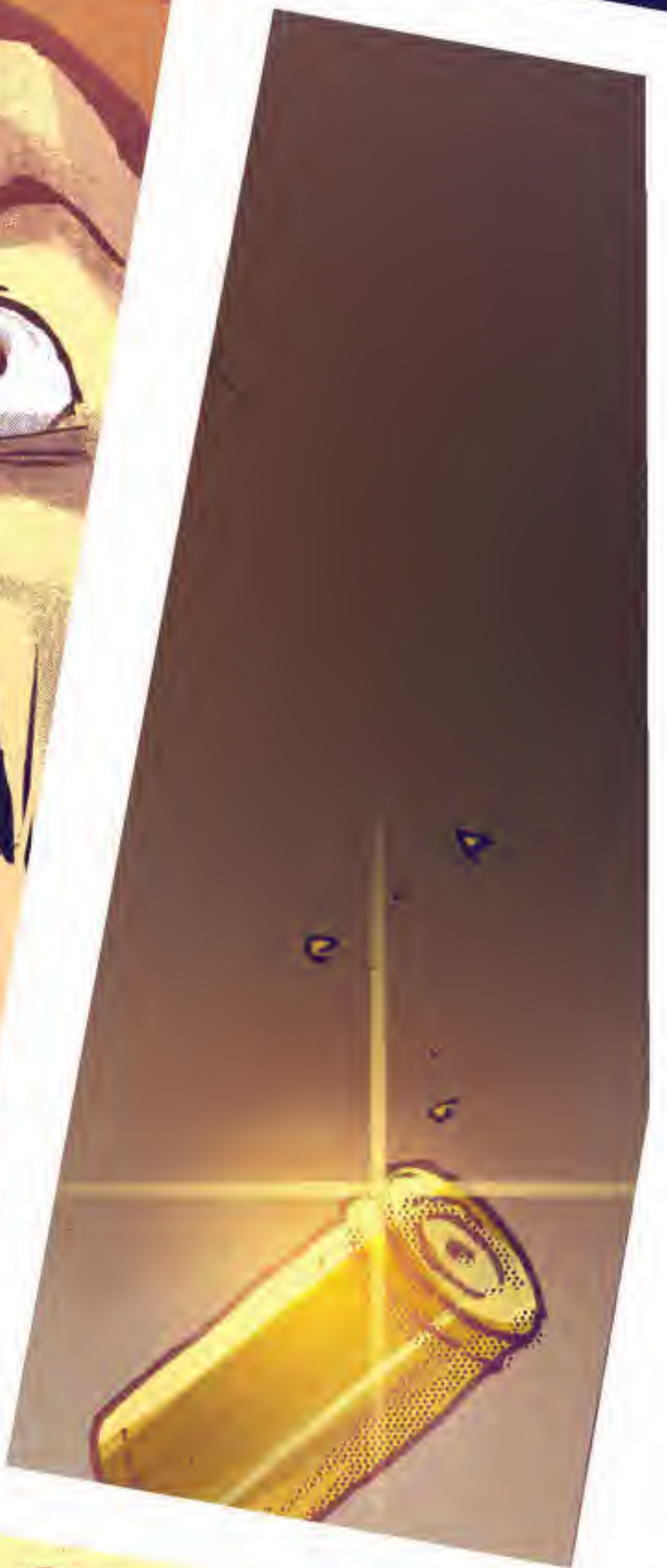
...YES, DAMN YOU.

YES.



**BRAM
CHOK**

...AND THE SHADOW
CHOOSES!



KRAKAFWOOM



QUICK
THOUGHT--DID
WE **WANT** THAT TO
BLOW UP?



I--I...I AM
AN HONEST--



WAYNE!



YOU--YOU DID IT. THEY'RE
DROPPING!



I--I
CAN FEEL
IT.

THE
POWER--

LIKE A
NUMBNESS--

IT'S TOO
MUCH--

LOOK AT ME, WAYNE!
LOOK AT MY EYES!



LET
YOUR
MIND
MEET
MINE!



HOLD ON!
HOLD ON!





AWAKE,
BRUCE WAYNE...

...IT'S
OVER.



I HAVE
**ENCRYPTED
CHANNELS.**
ALFRED WILL
NOTIFY THE
DSS.

THEY'LL
SEE TRIAL IN
THE MATERIAL
WORLD, EVERY
ONE OF THEM.
ONCE THEY
WAKE UP...



...GENERATION AFTER
GENERATION OF MURDER.
AND LOOK--HE COULD
BE **ANYONE.**



DEATH
CAN DRIVE
US TO **COLD
ENDS...**



...WITHOUT
THE RIGHT
GUIDANCE.

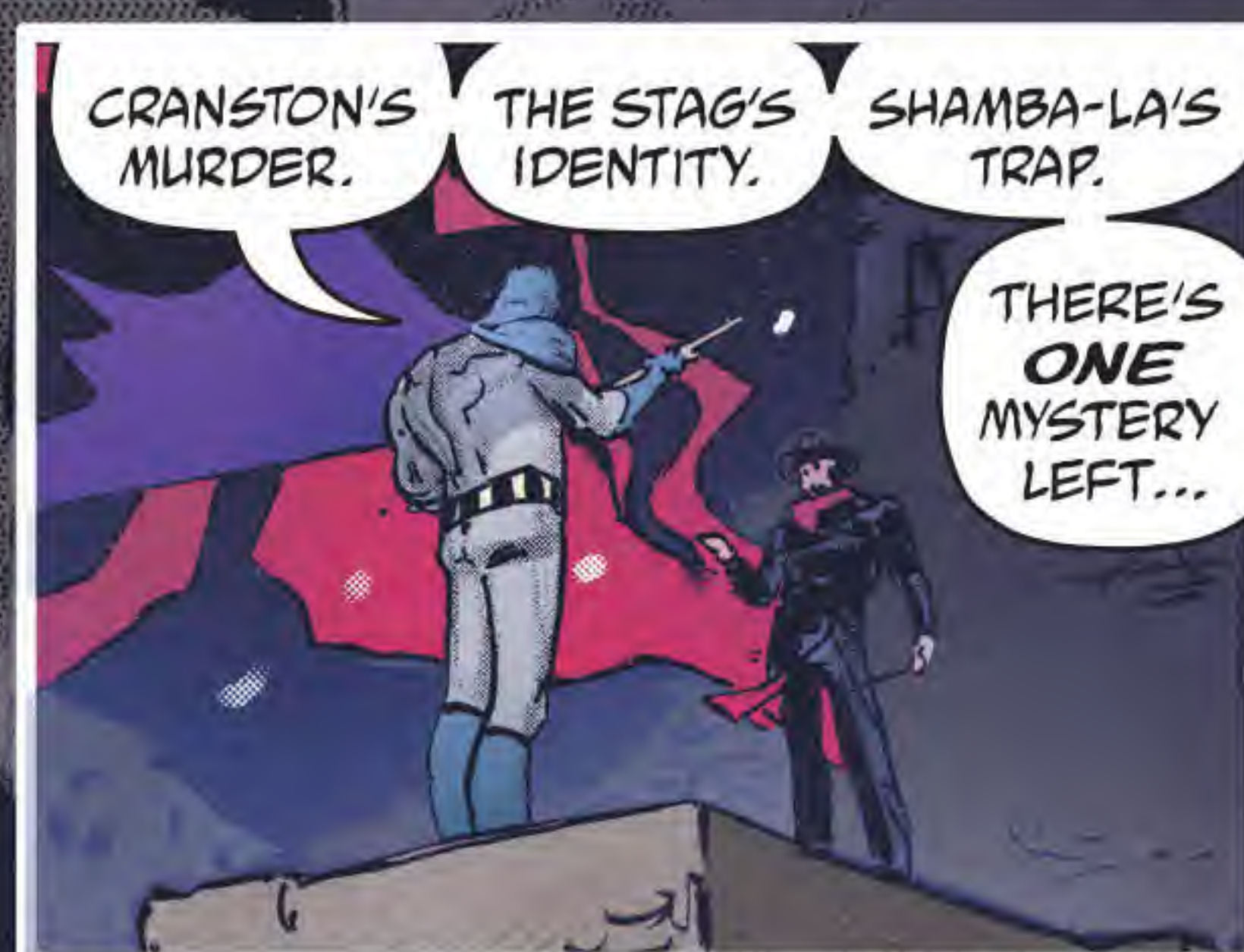
GUIDANCE.
PLEASE.
THIS IS NO
VICTORY. I'VE
FAILED.
DON'T YOU
SEE?



IT'S **GONE,**
YOU IDIOT.
...IT'S ALL
GONE...

THE FRENCH ALPS.
PROVENCE-ALPES-
CÔTE D'AZUR.

WEEKS LATER.





...YOU SAID IT
NO LONGER
MATTERED...



...THERE IN THE
TOMBS, AS I HELD
YOUR BEATEN...
BROKEN BODY.



BUT NOW,
REVIVED,
YOU ASK
AGAIN.



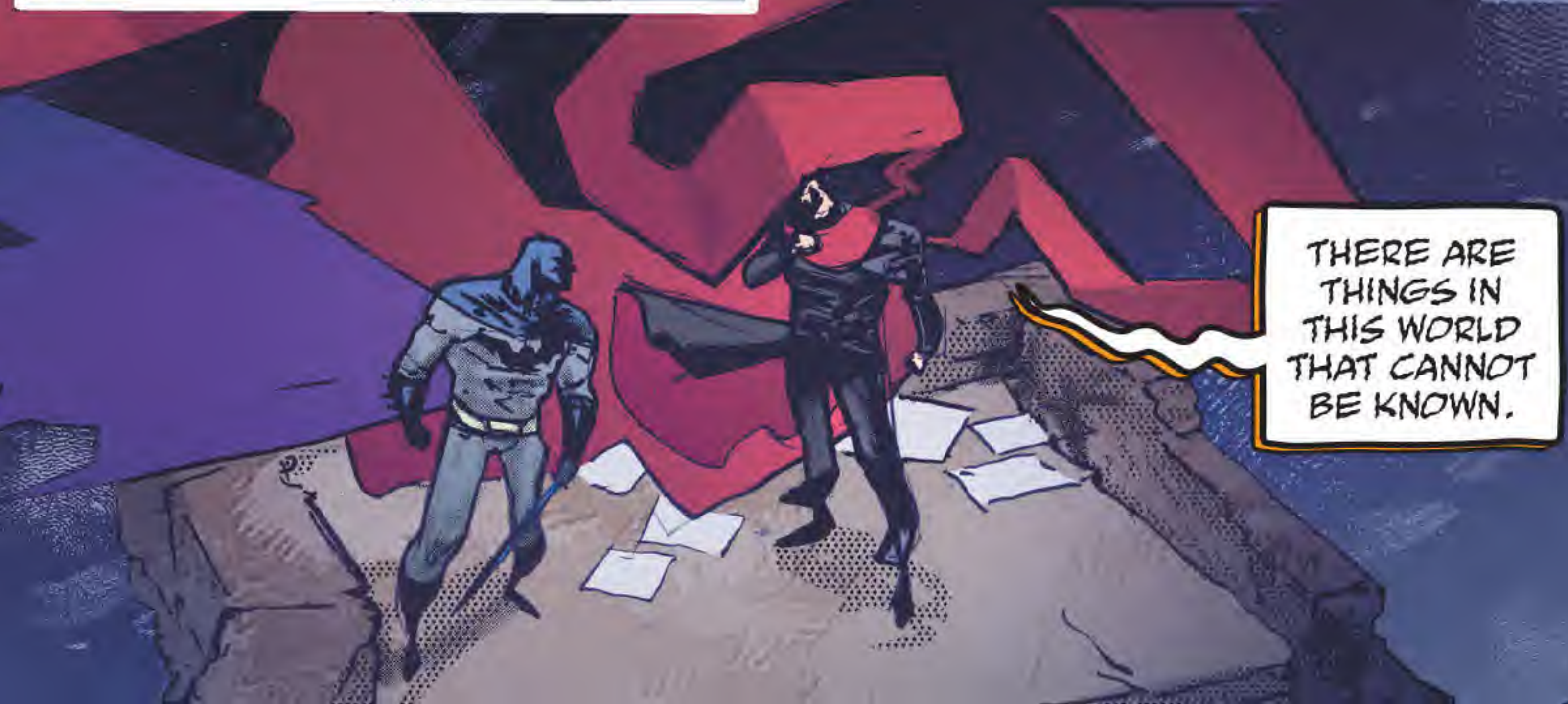
YOU
STILL
SEEK
THE
TRUTH.



WHEN IN
FACT THE
TRUTH
HAS NEVER
BEEN
HIDDEN,
BRUCE.



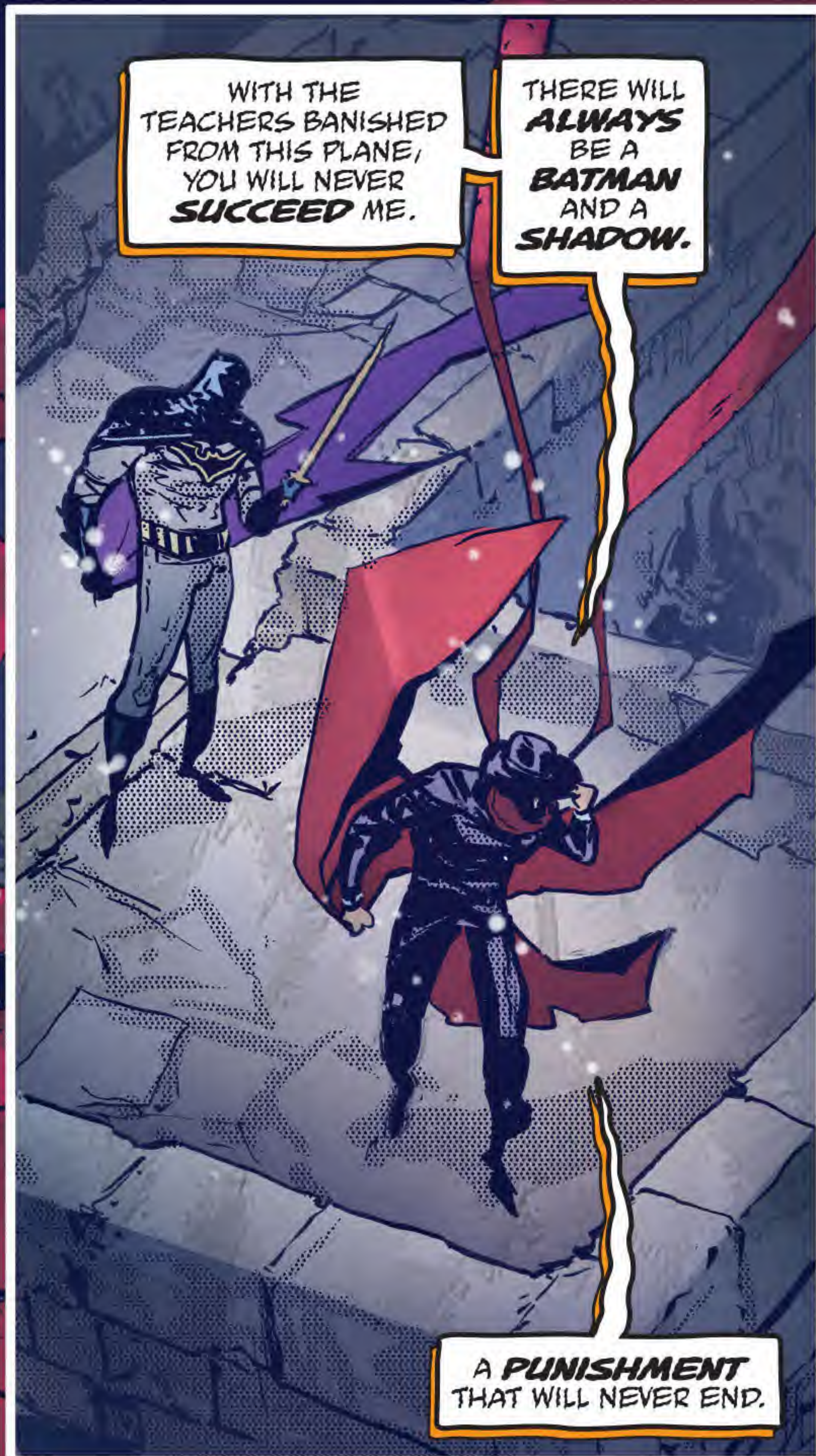
YOUR FIGHT TO
ACCEPT WHAT I
HAVE SAID FROM
THE START...



THERE ARE
THINGS IN
THIS WORLD
THAT CANNOT
BE KNOWN.



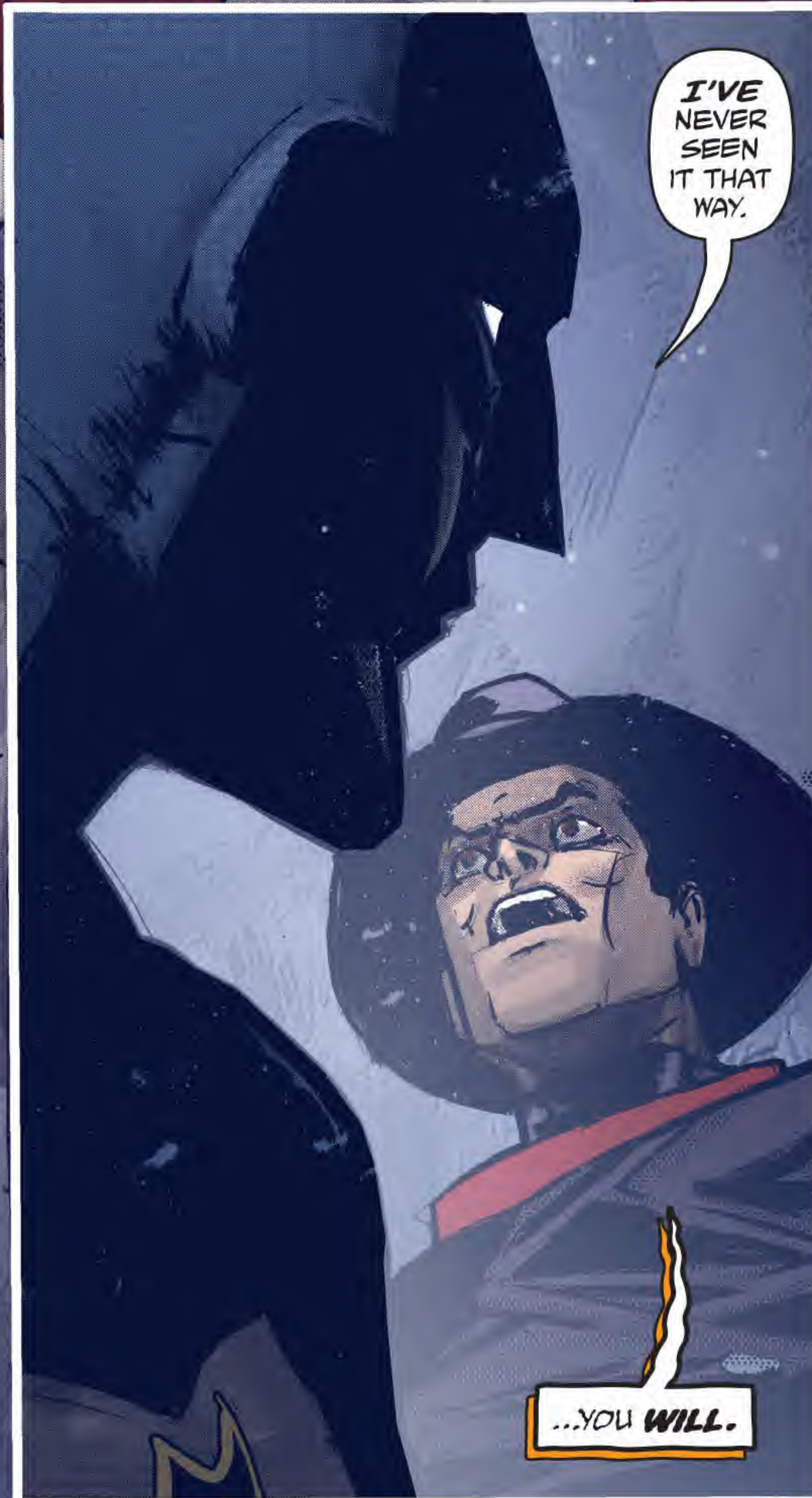
...AND THERE
ALWAYS
WILL BE.



WITH THE
TEACHERS BANISHED
FROM THIS PLANE,
YOU WILL NEVER
SUCCEED ME.

THERE WILL
ALWAYS
BE A
BATMAN
AND A
SHADOW.

A **PUNISHMENT**
THAT WILL NEVER END.



I'VE
NEVER
SEEN
IT THAT
WAY.

...YOU **WILL.**

A large, dark, atmospheric illustration of Batman and Shadow on a rooftop. Batman, in his iconic suit, stands on the right, looking towards Shadow. Shadow, wearing a black trench coat and a wide-brimmed hat, stands on the left, holding a wooden staff. The background is a dark, starry sky with large, jagged, red and purple geometric shapes floating around them. The rooftop is made of grey stone blocks.


THIS
LIFE...IT ISN'T
A **CURSE**,
SHADOW.

A close-up of Batman's face, looking upwards with a slight smile. He is wearing his blue cowl and mask.

IF YOU'VE
TRULY WATCHED
ME THIS LONG, ALL
THE WAY FROM CRIME
ALLEY...

A close-up of Shadow's face, looking towards Batman. He is wearing his black hat and trench coat.


...THEN
YOU **KNOW**
THAT.

A close-up of Batman's face, looking towards Shadow. He is wearing his blue cowl and mask.

YOU'VE
LIVED A CENTURY
OF PUNISHMENT...
YOUR NEXT ONE
CAN BE ABOUT
MORE.

A close-up of Shadow's face, looking towards Batman. He is wearing his black hat and trench coat.

THERE **IS**
NOTHING
MORE.

A close-up of Batman's face, looking towards Shadow. He is wearing his blue cowl and mask.

I CAN
TEACH YOU,
I CAN **SHOW**
YOU, IF YOU'LL
LET ME...

...IF YOU THINK
THAT, WAYNE,
YOU'VE LEARNED
NOTHING.

I DON'T
THINK,
SHADOW...

A comic book illustration featuring Batman and the Penguin. Batman, in his iconic grey and blue suit with a yellow bat emblem, is shown from the waist up, looking down with a determined expression. He is holding a small, dark object in his right hand. The Penguin, wearing a black suit with a red cape and a top hat, stands in the upper left corner, looking towards Batman. The background is a dark, rocky rooftop with a large, stylized red 'X' shape. The sky is a deep purple with white stars. A speech bubble from the Penguin contains the text "I KNOW.".

I KNOW.

THE END

Variant cover art for BATMAN/THE SHADOW #1
by Tim Sale and Brennan Wagner





Variant cover art for **BATMAN/THE SHADOW #1**
by Cliff Chiang



Variant cover art for BATMAN/THE SHADOW #2
by Chris Burnham and Nathan Fairbairn





TSALE
2017
BWAG

Variant cover art for BATMAN/THE SHADOW #3
by Tim Sale and Brennan Wagner



Variant cover art for BATMAN/THE SHADOW #4
by Tim Sale and Brennan Wagner



Variant cover art for BATMAN/THE SHADOW #4
by Steve Epting



Epting

Variant cover art for BATMAN/THE SHADOW #5
by Tim Sale and Brennan Wagner



Variant cover art for BATMAN/THE SHADOW #5
by Francesco Mattina





Variant cover art for BATMAN/THE SHADOW #6
by Jock





“Steve Orlando, Scott Snyder, Riley Rossmo and Ivan Plascencia have tapped into something wonderful, and strange.” —**Newsarama**

“BATMAN fans with a hankering for obscure elements of the Bat-mythos will find a lot to like here.” —**Paste Magazine**

“We truly are living in a new golden age of comic book crossovers.” —**IGN**

TWO UNSTOPPABLE VIGILANTES. ONE IMMORTAL KILLER. NO SECOND CHANCES.

As Gotham City’s guardian, Batman has investigated nearly every kind of murder—but he’s never seen a homicide as strange as this. The death of Lamont Cranston, an Arkham Asylum employee, leads the Dark Knight Detective to an impossible conclusion: the crime was committed by a man also named Lamont Cranston, who died more than 50 years ago—a man better known as the Shadow.

The Shadow is definitely alive and kicking, however, and once Batman picks up his trail he will stop at nothing to bring him to justice. But it soon becomes clear that the hunter and his quarry are both entangled in a much larger web of evil—a conspiracy that threatens everything they have sworn to protect.

Now Batman and the Shadow must put aside their differences to stop a terrifying new foe called the Stag, who has set his sights first on Gotham and then the world. And this merciless monster has a partner of his own: the Clown Prince of Crime himself, the Joker.

Can the Shadow and the Bat stop this unholy alliance? Or will these two brilliant crime-fighters fall victim to the twisted genius of their archnemeses?

New York Times best-selling author **Scott Snyder** joins forces with acclaimed talents **Steve Orlando** and **Riley Rossmo** for **BATMAN/THE SHADOW: THE MURDER GENIUSES**—an action-packed thriller centuries in the making!

dccomics.com